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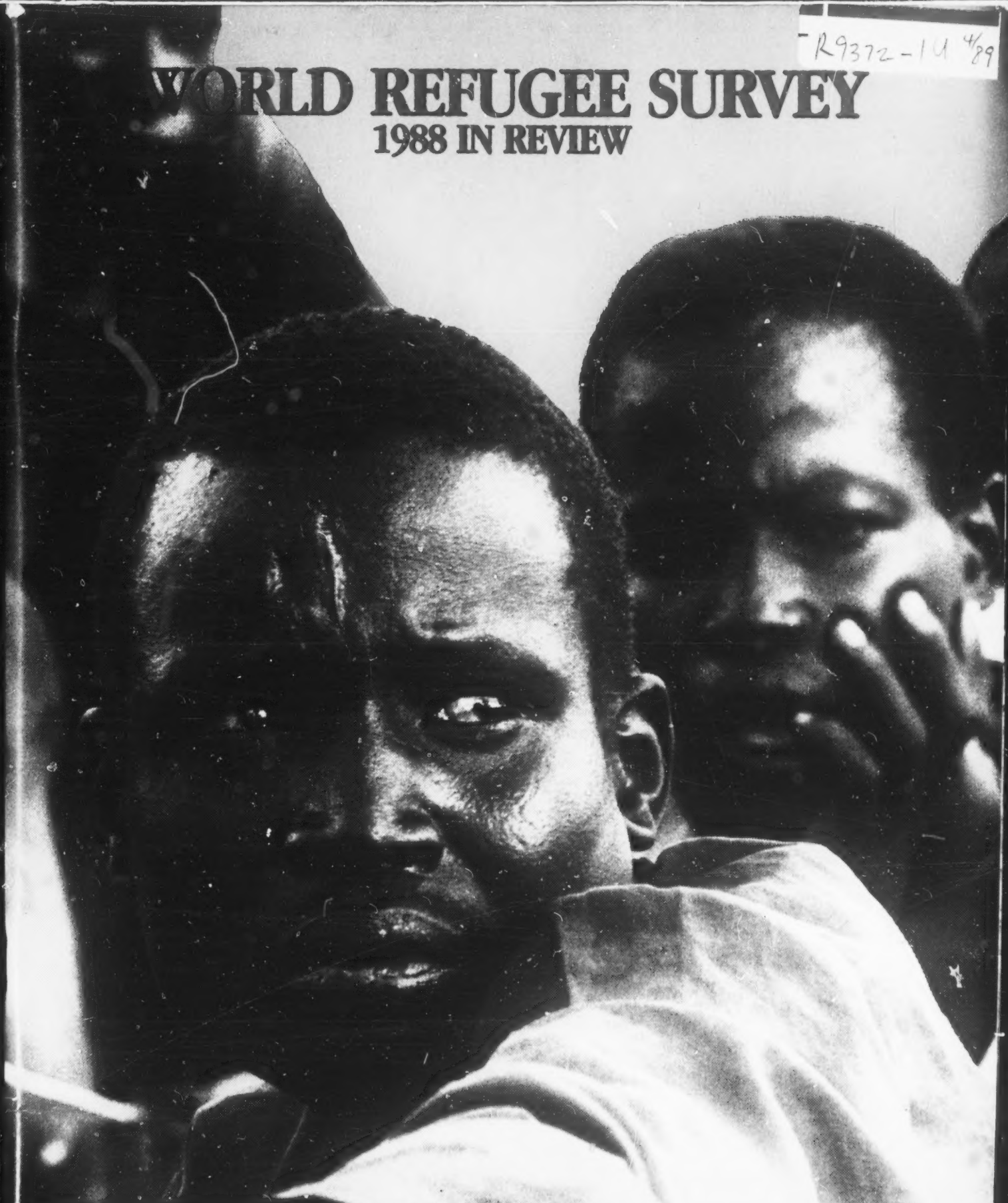
WORLD REFUGEE SURVEY
1988 IN REVIEW



U.S. COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES

Fourteen million refugees. Cambodians trapped in a war zone. Vietnamese pushed from the safety of Thailand's coast. An explosion of human suffering in southern Africa. Two million Dinkas facing violence and starvation in southern Sudan. Somalis fleeing into the forbidding camps of Ethiopia. Kurds escaping chemical weapons in Iraq for uncertain asylum in Iran and Turkey. Haitians interdicted on the high seas. Large numbers of Central American asylum seekers detained in Texas.

In thirty-one years of work on behalf of refugee protection, the task of the U.S. Committee for Refugees remains the same as it was when USCR was formed in 1958: to offer the clear, objective information people need to make wise decisions about refugees and displaced people, the uprooted victims of human conflict. Who are they? Why did they flee? Are they being protected? When will it be safe for them to return home? What can governments, private agencies, and concerned individuals do to help?

In 1982, USCR and the American Council for Nationalities Service were merged. The continuing nonprofit corporation is ACNS; however, the distinctive USCR name and program of public information and advocacy regarding the world's uprooted remain unchanged.

Protecting refugees means on-site documentation. In 1988, we gathered unique, first-hand information about refugees and displaced persons in Thailand, southern Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya.

Protecting refugees means informing the public and policymakers. In 1988, USCR staff testified before congressional committees, briefed members of congress, government officials, and international organizations; spoke with civic and community groups. USCR issued papers on humanitarian parole for Cambodians in Thailand; the fragile asylum of Mozambican refugees; the inequities of U.S. asylum policies; the condition of refugees from Bangladesh in India; and the story of refugees in the Horn of Africa. Articles by and about USCR appeared in hundreds of newspapers around the world, including the *New York Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, and the *London Observer*. USCR staff appeared on CBS Nightly News, National Public Radio, and the Today Show, and provided dozens of other television and radio interviews.

Protecting refugees means presenting their case to the governments involved. This year, USCR staff communicated its concerns to the governments of the United States, Thailand, South Africa, India, Honduras, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, Iraq, Israel, Burma, and dozens of others.

We do all of this based on a belief that lies at the center of our work: once the consciences of men and women are aroused, great deeds can be accomplished. And, while some of the refugees of concern to us fled their homes long ago, the same beliefs apply to those who left only last week, or just this morning.

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CONTRIBUTIONS FOR USCR'S EFFORTS TO INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT REFUGEES WORLDWIDE ARE NEEDED AND WELCOMED.

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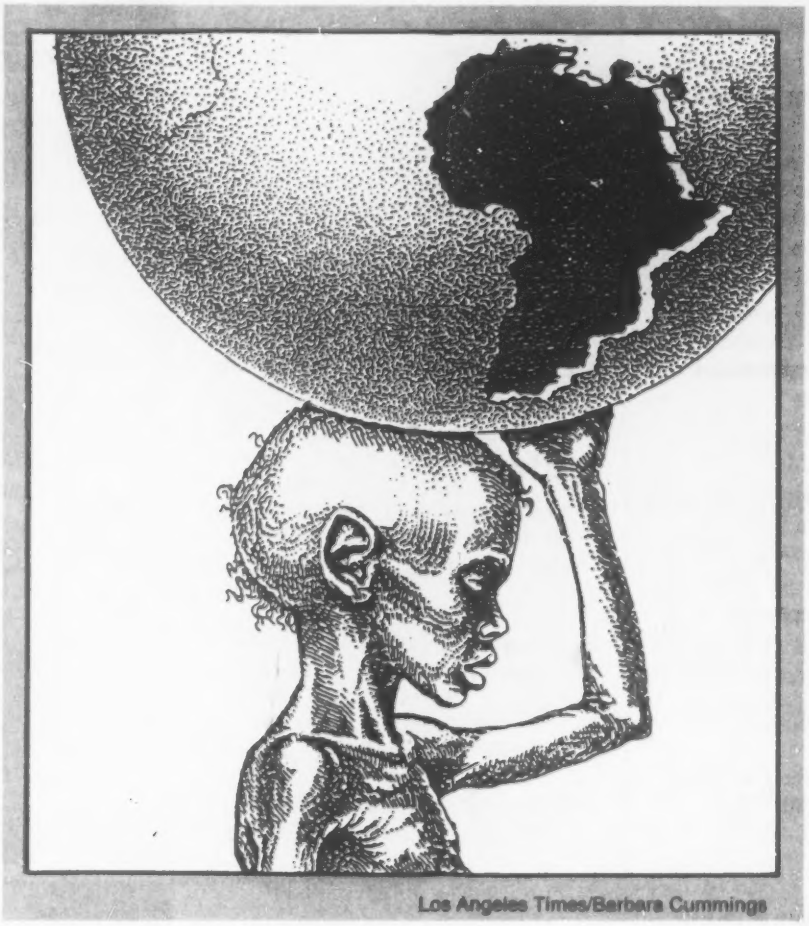
Cover photo of displaced refugees in southern Sudan is courtesy of Morten Hvaal.

The Year in Review

Roger P. Winter

Refugees need a permanent home. But, as victims of persecution and war, they have minimal control over their destinies. A solution for their homelessness must often seem utterly beyond their power to effect. That is because refugees are the flotsam of power struggles—world, regional, national, and local. The powerful, who have created the misery of the weak, have little regard for the tolls they have exacted and even less incentive for rectifying the losses incurred because of their actions. Therefore, the refugees are left to wait. And, if they retain the energy, to hope.

They hope that those who control the destiny of governments might take actions that will have the inadvertent bonus of affecting their destiny for the better as well. But the basic changes in the lives of common people that trickle down after negotiators have concluded their business are not easy to come by and don't materialize quickly. A year ago. we looked forward to the hope of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, progress on the Central America peace plan, a peace accord in Sri Lanka, and the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. A year later, progress has been made on a number of these situations. However, for most of the refugees another year has been added to their exile.



Los Angeles Times/Barbara Cummings

Still, progress between the superpowers and on some regional conflicts offers hope that perhaps soon the worldwide refugee population—now at 14 million—will decrease rather than increase. The dramatic progress on a settlement in Namibia adds to this hope.

In the meantime, reality confronts us. Hundreds of thousands of new refugees have been created in 1988 in Africa, largely fleeing conflict in southern Sudan, northern Somalia, and Mozambique. The situation for Vietnamese refugees in Thailand degenerated early in the year, resulting in great loss of life and sparking an as yet unfinished fundamental reassessment of refugee policy throughout Southeast Asia. The end of the Iran-Iraq war, instead of bringing the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of refugees, actually resulted in the exile of an additional 100,000 Iraqi Kurds, and the internal displacement of perhaps ten times that number, as Iraq turned its guns —and more insidious weapons—away from its external enemy and onto troublesome elements within its own population.

While the resolution of so many refugee problems seems both tantalizingly close and as far away as ever, the interim protection of refugees through the offer of asylum and resettlement has noticeably deteriorated in 1988. Western Europe and North America continued a matrix of restrictive asylum policies and practices—particularly for refugees from the Third World—that are undermining the quality of refugee protection worldwide. The psychology, even the morality, of those in the developed world responsible for this latter situation is difficult to comprehend.

Political realism is essential in defining the level of flexibility nations adopt in permitting the entry of asylum seekers. But what has all-too-often happened is that principles are tossed to the winds and approaches are adopted that not only are biased or are unfairly restrictive, but moreover are designed to frustrate the asylum seeker's access to any system at all in which his claim might be adjudicated.

Roger Winter is the director of the U.S. Committee for Refugees.

Despite serious poverty and other maladies in parts of the developed world, the very truth is that most of us in North America and Western Europe are materially well off, even fat by the standards of most of the world's people. In December, Bishop Herbert W. Chilstrom, head of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, recounted some of his recent experiences in the Third World. He said the sight of starving children and homeless people persuaded him that "never again will I be able to say I am middle class. The truth is I am a very rich person, and so are you." He said the chief sin that comes with acquiring possessions is that "we turn in on ourselves."

Perhaps turning in on ourselves is not so different from turning our backs on others, protecting what we have. With the chasm that divides the world's rich from its poor growing wider and deeper, this may be the genesis of the new policies of restrictionism, an attempt to bar those other masses. But this approach ignores the fact that governments are specifically obligated by international covenant to deal with refugees and asylum seekers differently from other migrants. To avoid this, some have asserted that refugees are not refugees at all, but rather are economically motivated, simply trying to join us because of what we have.

We don't have the moral right to underestimate refugee pain. We have the moral obligation to consider their fears with ungerrymandered criteria and to respond generously. The moral wrong is the risk of rebuffing, to our later shame, deserving individuals and undermining, perhaps for years to come, the international refugee protection system, one of the most humanitarian systems the international community has yet constructed.

As usual, 1988 was a year of pluses and minuses for refugees. The most dramatic event early in the year was the action taken by *Thailand* to crack down on Vietnamese boat people. Beginning in late January, an interdiction blockade in the Gulf of Thailand deflected and redirected refugee boats headed to Thailand. Many boats were pushed back as they sought to land. In the process, several hundred refugees died. The changed psychology of the situation spawned a dramatic increase in pirate attacks against refugees. During the following months, attitudes in other first asylum countries of the region hardened. Pushbacks continued in *Indonesia*. *Hong Kong* rushed to implement a new screening program as a deterrent. *Malaysia* announced its intention to close its major refugee camp.

That these developments were tragic for individual Vietnamese refugees cannot be minimized. The events did, however, trigger movement towards a fundamental reassessment of the refugee situation in the region, including calls for a new international conference on the matter. It will be crucial in 1989 for the international community to resist pressures to wash its hands of the continuing exodus from Vietnam and to construct a truly principled approach that employs the full range of humanitarian solutions for these refugees—one that, while achieving improved control and minimizing less compelling flight, also fully protects refugees.

Refugees are the flotsam of power struggles—world, regional, national, and local.

Thailand has unfortunately also allowed the deterioration of the screening program for refugees from *Laos* that it implemented in 1985. As a result, Hmong in particular continue to be pushed back into Laos. The U.S. quietly began to reconsider for resettlement some previously rejected Cambodians at Khao I Dang, a welcome change. Thailand made several important improvements in life quality and security for Cambodians located along the Thailand-Cambodia border, but inaction by Thailand and the international community permitted the dread Khmer Rouge to force thousands of refugees back into *Cambodia*. Finally, Thailand, which for years has provided unofficial haven for ethnic Karen and others who have fled fighting in *Burma*, also received a substantial number of students who fled political upheaval in most of Burma's major cities. Unfortunately, Thailand has not permitted UNHCR to fulfill its mandate regarding these refugees.

Aside from the successful final stages of the repatriation of *Ugandan* refugees from Sudan, the situation of refugees in Africa deteriorated markedly in 1988. The most predictable event was the continuing exodus from ravished *Mozambique*. The U.S. State Department released an invaluable report analyzing violence against civilians, attributing the great mass of it to the Renamo forces. Although the refugees have fled to every contiguous country, tiny *Malawi* has a refugee burden in many ways unmatched by any in the world. The refugee influx is a twelfth of the nation's own population.

Three other situations in Africa exploded into view in 1988. In August, ethnic violence in northern *Burundi* killed thousands and forced the flight of more than 50,000 to *Rwanda*.

Conflict in northern *Somalia* resulted in massive destruction in the major city of Hargeisa. In June, some 350,000 fled into nearby *Ethiopia*, which itself remains the Horn of Africa's largest refugee producer. The situation of the Somali refugees deteriorated in late 1988, resulting in substantial criticism of UNHCR by the nongovernmental organizations providing assistance.

The conflict in southern *Sudan* finally entered the world's focus. This current phase of the struggle between the Islamic, Arabized north and the non-Islamic, African south resulted in the deaths of at least 260,000 civilians in 1988 alone from direct violence and disrupted food production and distribution. Militias affiliated with the Sudan army targeted ethnic Dinka for violence, causing a trek of hundreds of miles for tens of thousands of young Dinka men and boys. In March, they began to arrive in Ethiopia in dramatic numbers, but even more dramatic condition. Relief workers said that as many as a quarter did not survive the journey, and that those who arrived in Ethiopia were in the worst physical condition of any refugee flow in decades. In all, 350,000 southern Sudanese refugees remain in Ethiopian camps.

The larger tragedy was that of southern civilians who remained in Sudan as "internally displaced people." A million made their way to Khartoum to escape the direct fighting. There, the poorest of the poor, unassisted by a government that viewed them as a threat, they were the worst hit victims of August's massive Nile flooding. Most remain unassisted to this day. Interdiction

of food supplies by authorities left many civilians in the transitional zone between north and south in absolute famine, as well as the victims of violent militias. And in the very south, the government was present in only a limited number of garrison towns. These towns, as well as towns like Kapoeta, controlled by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army, were ringed with thousands of the formerly proud, now dispossessed, often dying southern Sudanese.

It is hard to believe that a humanitarian tragedy of this dimension, fully known to governments including our own, could materialize with nary a murmur until the outcry of refugees and advocates, the beginnings of a media focus, and the burgeoning awareness of ordinary people of good will in many nations finally began to change the political equities and force a response.

Where was the UN? Where was the Organization of African Unity? Where was the world's humanitarian machinery in such a case? Sadly, there is little the international community is obliged to do, and little that it actually does. Such a situation is viewed as the "internal affair" of the country in question, whose government may well be fully or partially responsible for the very existence of the tragedy in the first place. Protecting and assisting internally displaced civilians—when the responsible government can't or won't respond adequately—is a major unresolved item for the international humanitarian agenda.

Millions of people remained internally displaced across South Asia and the Middle East as a result of unresolved civil conflicts, more often than not involving external powers. Two million displaced persons within *Afghanistan* were as obstructed from returning to their homes as the five million in exile in *Pakistan* and *Iran*. The exit of thousands of Soviet troops did not deter those remaining from continuing to engage in brutalities against the Afghan people and their land.

Hundreds of thousands of *Sri Lankans* remained internally displaced or in exile in *India* despite the signing a year ago of a peace accord meant to resolve the conflicts in that island nation. Hundreds of thousands remained displaced in *Lebanon* as well, as that country continued to be battered by competing warlords and militias. *Palestinian* refugees were still vulnerable to violence in Lebanon, as well as the occupied territories of *Israel*, where refugee camps

Where was the world's humanitarian machinery when southern Sudanese needed it?

were the scene of pitched battles and collective punishments.

Although the shooting stopped in the Iran-Iraq war, it produced the ironic result of new waves of repression against the internal enemies of both Saddam Hussein and Ayatollah Khomeini. An escalation of arrests and executions in *Iran* clearly signalled to Iranian refugees that it was not yet safe to return. *Iraq*, on the other hand, used the armistice as an opportunity to wage all-out war on the Kurds of the mountainous north, displacing hundreds of thousands within Iraq and causing tens of thousands to flee to neighboring *Turkey* and Iran. Turkey was particularly uneasy with the new influx, and continued to refuse to grant refugee status to refugees from either Iraq or Iran.

In Central America, civilians displaced by warfare and violence within their own countries, as well as refugees throughout the region and in North America, continued the wait for peace and security. Human rights conditions deteriorated in both *Guatemala* and *El Salvador*, with refugees continuing to flee those countries and spontaneously make their way north. Some Salvadoran refugees decided to return home, despite great turmoil and risk there. Their decision in part reflected the privations of their lives in *Honduran* refugee camps. *Nicaraguans* in Honduras fared somewhat better, but Honduras was indicating reluctance to continue to provide haven for either refugee group. Although fighting in the contra war reached a standstill late in the year, tens of thousands of Nicaraguans continued to flee the Sandinista regime and the shambles of an economy beset by war and natural disasters.

A dramatic increase in applications for asylum in the *United States* and *Canada*, especially from Central Americans, led both countries to make it increasingly difficult to file and pursue asylum claims. A U.S. federal judge ruled that the Immigration and Naturalization Service uses methods "from subtle persuasion to outright threats and misrepresentations" to coerce and intimidate Salvadoran asylum seekers into abandoning their asylum claims.

Thanks to a continued relaxation of emigration policies in the *Soviet Union*, more than 70,000 people left in 1988, predominantly *ethnic Germans*, *Armenians*, and *Jews*.

These are welcome developments, although they challenge the United States and its resettlement partners to expand migration opportunities beyond a refugee context in order to accommodate such large numbers. While the reduction of east-west conflicts can pave the way for more constructive efforts to resolve some of the world's most trying refugee quandaries, among the greatest challenges will be the north-south variety, low intensity conflicts in the Third World, often involving brutal repression and wrenching dislocation.

The United States has a unique role to play in setting the tone for international response to these refugees and displaced people. The issue ultimately is one of moral, principled leadership, but too often that leadership does not surface without ordinary people supplying the motivation.

We are a people of causes. And when a cause catches us, strange and sometimes wonderful things happen. The little girl down the well, the ice-bound whales, the victims of earthquake in Armenia—all these caught us.

Refugees and displaced people are victims. A few are controversial. But the bulk are regular people caught up in persecution and violence. As a nation and as individuals, we have increasingly made the very tragic error of believing that refugees are one of our problems, rather than their becoming one of our causes.

We have a chance with a new Administration to change our course. While dealing with immigration enforcement, we should give the highest priority to preserving a humanitarian response to asylum seekers. While framing our foreign policy, we should give a priority of the highest order to human rights, to humanitarian assistance, to solutions to refugee movements, all in politically neutral terms that focus on the vulnerability of the victims of persecution and conflict.

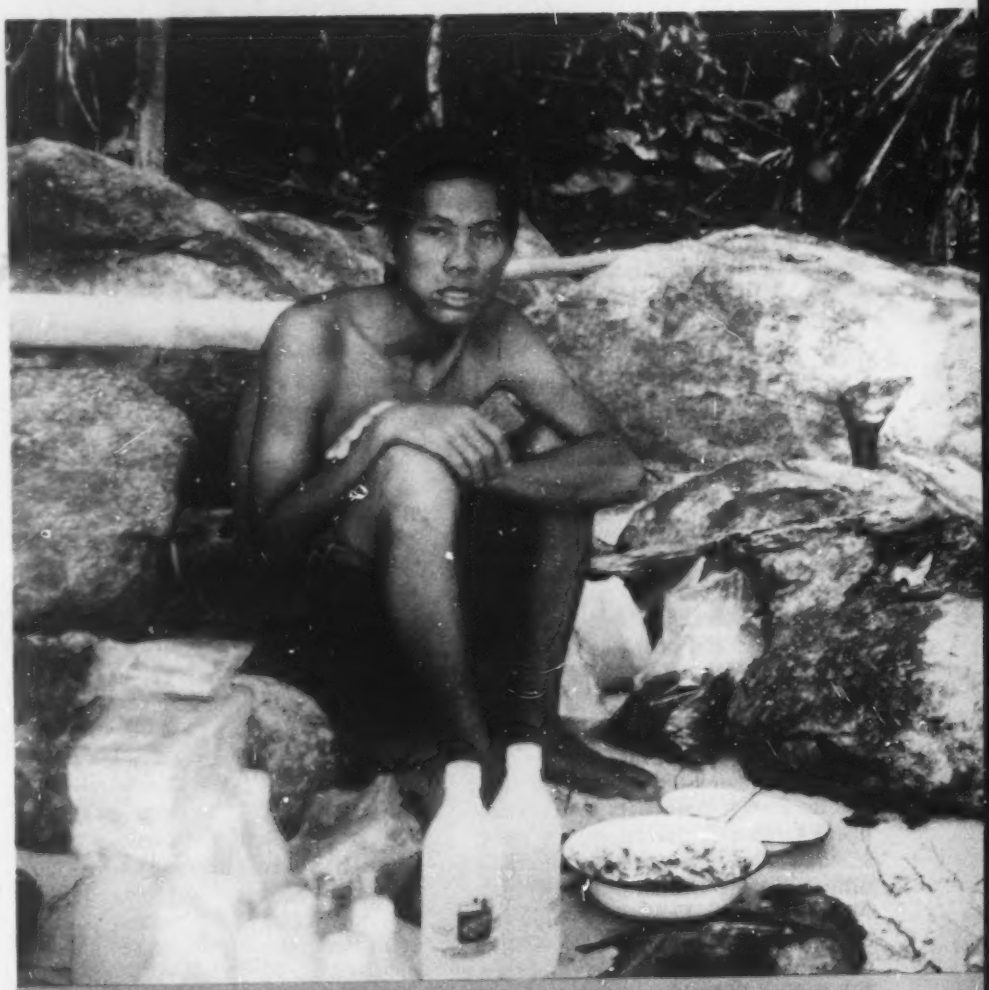
Sins of Omission: The New Vietnamese Refugee Crisis

Court Robinson

In late May 1988, a boatload of 110 Vietnamese refugees set off from the southern port of Ben Tre, bound for an asylum camp in the region and, ultimately, resettlement in the West, following a route travelled by more than one million people before them. As has happened so often before, something went horribly wrong. Three days out, the engine failed and the boat began to drift. Two weeks later, somewhere in the South China Sea, the refugees flagged down a U.S. warship, the Dubuque. In what the captain later called a "tragedy of errors," they were not rescued, but simply reprovisioned with food and water and then turned away, 260 miles from the nearest land. When the supplies ran out and several of the weaker passengers died, their bodies were cannibalized by some of the others. Reportedly, three victims were forcibly drowned before they were eaten. By the time Filipino fishermen rescued the refugees in late June, only 52 people remained alive.

The captain of the Dubuque has been relieved of his command and court-martialed. One of the refugees may be tried for murder. Dozens of people are dead, and dozens more lives have been shattered. But the real tragedy is that the Vietnamese had to escape in the first place; they should have been able to migrate legally. The fact that 14 years after refugee flows first began Vietnamese feel they must choose dangerous, clandestine flight on the high seas instead of a safe and orderly departure goes to the heart of the current refugee crisis in Southeast Asia. It is a crisis brought on more by errors of omission than of commission, by alternatives left unexplored, and roads not taken.

Refugee outflows from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam since 1975 now total well over two million people. Spurred by Vietnamese government repression and harassment, refugees poured out of Vietnam in overcrowded freighters, fishing junks, and makeshift rafts. The boat flows peaked in the summer of 1979, when 55,000 Vietnamese sought asylum in a single month. Concern mounted further when the Malaysian government confirmed that it had towed more than 40,000 Vietnamese back to the open sea. Pushbacks, often with substantial loss of life, were documented in Thailand and Indonesia with alarming frequency as well.



In February 1988, off Thailand's coast, a fishing trawler repeatedly rammed this Vietnamese refugee's boat. He swam to this island, waiting for rescue. He did not know what happened to the four friends he had escaped with. USCR/C. Robinson

In July 1979, the United Nations convened an international conference in Geneva to seek solutions to what clearly had become a major humanitarian crisis. The 65 governments in attendance reached consensus on three fundamental commitments: countries in the region would provide at least temporary asylum, the international community would provide resettlement places for those who had already fled, and the countries of origin would discourage illegal and dangerous departures, and instead cooperate with the United Nations and with other countries to promote more orderly outflows.

Court Robinson is a policy analyst with the U.S. Committee for Refugees.

Just one month before the Geneva conference, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had signed a memorandum of understanding with Vietnam, agreeing to a seven-point program for the orderly departure from Vietnam of "family reunion and other humanitarian cases." Such an initiative would necessarily need to start small, but was intended to serve as a viable alternative to boat departure. "The success of any plan of action," warned a UN statement on the conference, "would depend on a substantial reduction of the disorderly exodus of thousands of persons from their homeland."

The conference appeared to be a success on virtually all counts. Worldwide resettlement commitments, which had stood at 125,000 in May, were more than doubled to 260,000. The United States alone promised to raise Indochinese refugee admissions to 14,000 per month for 1979. Vietnam, for its part, clamped down on the semi-official smuggling organizations that had promoted the cynical and wholesale export of its unwanted ethnic Chinese population. With the reduction in organized outflows and the advent of the Orderly Departure Program (ODP), boat arrivals in the region began to decline almost immediately, and pushbacks ended, at least as official policy.

The Geneva conference built consensus around a precarious *quid pro quo*: asylum countries in the region—Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and the Philippines—agreed to give refugees temporary haven on the understanding that resettlement countries—principally, the United States, Canada, Australia, and France—would offer them permanent homes. For nearly a decade, that consensus held. More than 1.7 million Indochinese refugees have been resettled around the world, over half of those in the United States. From 1980 to the end of 1987, departures for resettlement outpaced arrivals, and the populations in the refugee camps gradually declined.

For two years, 1984 and 1985, legal departures via ODP were higher than boat arrivals in the region. Through the end of 1985, ODP departures totalled 100,000, almost half of these coming to the United States. Then on January 1, 1986, Vietnam suspended any further interviewing of ODP applicants for the U.S. program, complaining of a backlog of 22,000 cases. This suspension, combined with more restrictive processing criteria on the U.S. side, reduced legal refugee departures from 700 per month to 480 per month in 1986. Worldwide ODP departures dropped from nearly 25,000 in 1985 to under 13,000 two years later.

Resettlement as a protection mechanism . . . was never designed to stand alone.

Thailand's Patience Snaps

In late 1987, Vietnamese refugee arrivals in Thailand surged, with most coming by way of a relatively safe route that took them overland through Cambodia to the port of Kompong Som where they boarded boats for a short ride to Thailand's east coast. By year's end, Vietnamese arrivals in Thailand totalled almost 12,000, three times the number for 1986. Then Thailand's long-standing patience snapped.

On January 27, 1988, Thai marine police forced a boat carrying 40 Vietnamese asylum seekers back into international waters. The next day, the Minister of the Interior announced that all Vietnamese boats heading toward Thailand would be pushed back to sea. Although the government has since softened this position, in the months that followed, more than 2,300 Vietnamese were pushed back, resulting in over 200 deaths. The boat people who managed to reach Thailand safely after January have been moved to a new camp on the volatile Thai-Cambodian border where they have been denied the chance to seek resettlement.

The spark that Thailand lit ignited the region. At least 600 Vietnamese boat people who turned up in Malaysia in 1988 reported that they had been pushed off from Indonesia. In April, Indonesian forces fired on a refugee boat near Natuna Island, killing one person and injuring another. Malaysia, for its part, has announced that its main refugee camp, Pulau Bidong, will be closed to new arrivals some time in 1989.

On June 16, Hong Kong instituted a new screening policy under which all Vietnamese arriving after that date are considered illegal immigrants subject to detention and deportation, unless they can convince an immigration officer that they are refugees.

As word of these restrictive actions reached Vietnam, boat arrivals in the region tapered off. But by October 1988, the Vietnamese refugee population in Southeast Asia had climbed above 60,000, compared to 35,000 just one year earlier.

Vietnamese boat people are by no means the only refugee crisis Southeast Asia faces. Sporadic pushbacks of Hmong and other highland Lao groups continue in Thailand. Lowland Lao increasingly are denied access to a border screening program first instituted in 1985. And 300,000 Cambodian "displaced persons" live in dangerous and crowded encampments on the Thai-Cambodian border, without benefit of refugee status or protection. As if to underscore that vulnerability, the Khmer Rouge, who were responsible for the deaths of more than one million people during their four-year rule in Cambodia, recently removed almost 16,000 refugees from their UN-aided camps in Thailand and forcibly relocated them to malaria-ridden combat bases inside Cambodia.

There are no obvious solutions for any of these problems. But there is no question that a new regional consensus must be reached, beginning with Vietnamese refugees, if we are to avoid a continued breakdown in commitments to protection, asylum, and fundamental human rights. In the search for answers, it is important to articulate a vision of what could be: for those who are seeking temporary asylum, a chance to do so with adequate safeguards for their protection and well-being; for those who are seeking resettlement, the fullest possible opportunity to migrate directly from their own country; and for all those who wish it, a chance to go home again in safety and dignity.

Pull Factor Debated

No other refugee group has had a greater impact on national, regional, and international refugee policies in Southeast Asia than the Vietnamese. The Geneva conference in 1979 was convened primarily to address the boat people problem. The resettlement commitments made that year largely went

for Vietnamese admissions, as has the bulk of the worldwide numbers ever since. Thai asylum policies, and the original regional consensus linking asylum with resettlement, unravelled only when Vietnamese arrivals increased dramatically last year. And it is likely that Vietnamese refugees will be the predominant focus of the UN-sponsored international conference on Southeast Asian refugees that has been proposed for some time in 1989.

There are any number of reasons for this preoccupation. Most obvious is that Vietnamese refugee outflows have been larger and more sustained than those of other groups. Second, boat people are a regional phenomenon, whereas Laotian and Cambodian refugees have had an impact primarily on Thailand. Third, given the present political tensions as well as the long history of ethnic animosity in the region, Vietnamese arguably have been the least welcome of the refugee groups in Southeast Asia, and prospects for their local integration or voluntary repatriation have been remote, so international resettlement has been the most humane alternative available. Finally, at least as far as the United States is concerned, although there was extensive U.S. military involvement in all three countries of Indochina for the two decades preceding 1975, the primary and most substantial commitment was to Vietnam, and responsibility for its loss was felt keenly.

The policy of resettlement in order to secure asylum worked for Vietnamese refugees with often remarkable efficiency. The boat people population in the region dropped from 205,000 in mid-1979 to about 40,000 three years later. Over 226,000 more boat Vietnamese reached asylum in the region during that time, and 391,000 were resettled in other countries. But as the flows continued, the resettlement and asylum countries began to ask: Large-scale international resettlement may be preserving asylum, at least for the Vietnamese, but is it also perpetuating the need for asylum?

One of the many boats rescued in the South China Sea in 1988. UNHCR/Leduc

Officials and policymakers talked more and more openly of the "pull factor" and the "magnet effect," suggesting that the opportunity of resettlement in a Western country, especially in the United States, was drawing people out of Indochina, or at least factored significantly in their decision to leave. The often-heard corollary to this argument was that an increasing percentage of people leaving were not refugees, but "economic migrants," who were not fleeing persecution so much as they were seeking a new life overseas.

The U.S. government was sufficiently worried about the pull factor that in April 1982, it declared a moratorium on resettlement of all Indochinese refugees without immediate family, political, or professional ties to the United States. This group without U.S. ties (in Processing Priority 6, or more simply, P-6) retained their refugee status, and remained in camps administered by UNHCR. The message from the United States, however, was that until further notice they were not of "special humanitarian concern" for the purposes of U.S. resettlement.

Annual Vietnamese boat arrivals declined for five straight years after the moratorium was announced, but a new problem emerged. Along with continued P-6 arrivals, there was a growing number of cases otherwise rejected for resettlement by the United States and other countries. In 1981 and 1982, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service first began to reject Vietnamese claims to refugee status, arguing that the new Refugee Act of 1980 called for case-by-case determination of a "well-

founded fear of persecution." Prior to this, presumptive refugee eligibility had applied, and the only Vietnamese rejected for resettlement had been those who were excludable under regular immigration criteria. This buildup in rejected or ineligible cases introduced a new term in the refugee lexicon—*longstayers*, generally defined as refugees who had lived in camps for two years or more.

The Vietnamese longstayer problem became particularly acute in Hong Kong where, because of geographical proximity, the boat flow has been increasingly dominated by northern Vietnamese with no ties to the United States or other resettlement countries. By the end of 1987, Hong Kong's Vietnamese refugee population numbered 9,500, nearly half of whom had been in camps for three years or more. Seventy percent of the new arrivals were from the north.

Boat arrivals in Hong Kong had been climbing steadily each year since 1985, so it should not have been a complete surprise that when arrivals in Thailand and Malaysia jumped in late 1987 and early 1988, Hong Kong would experience a similar increase. But the numbers far surpassed even the most drastic predictions. From January to June 1988, more than 17,000 boat people poured into Hong Kong, the highest figures in nine years.

Boat flows did not stop after the government announced new screening measures in June. Indeed, more than 5,500 Vietnamese arrived in Hong Kong in July alone. Since then, the numbers have fallen quickly, from 2,300 in August, 300 in September, to 60 in October. Is this due to the arrival of monsoon season; fear of detention, mistreatment, and repatriation at the hands of the Hong Kong authorities; or a winnowing-out of the less desperate from the more desperate? The safest conclusion is probably all three.

High Resettlement Expectations

But it is imperative that we step back for a moment from our almost obsessive scrutiny of monthly arrival rates and profiles, annual resettlement offtake, camp demographics, daily rations, and the like, to see what has been taking place for Vietnamese refugees in Southeast Asia. For many years, Vietnamese have been arriving in asylum countries, fleeing political and ethnic persecution, human rights abuses, famine, and poverty. Their reasons for flight are compelling and varied, but it is fair to say that virtually all have left, not in search of asylum, but in search of resettlement.

A recent study of Vietnamese refugees in Southeast Asia sponsored by the Ford Foundation noted that "interview after interview, not only with new arrivals, but also with longstayers, pointed to a common link shared by those who had suffered long years of reeducation as well as those who had joined the flow for reasons less obvious: high expectations" about resettlement. The most frequently recorded expectation was that people would be resettled within six months to one year after arrival in an asylum country, and that they would be able to select their country of resettlement, the top choices being the United States, Canada, and Australia.

The fact that most Vietnamese expect to be, and have been, resettled quickly in the country of their choice, and that this may figure significantly in their decision to escape Vietnam, does not, and should not, lead to the conclusion that they are "economic migrants." In practically every case, motivations for leaving are complex, and reports from UNHCR and other field agencies indicate that a clear majority of arrivals appear to have fled due to a well-founded fear of persecution.

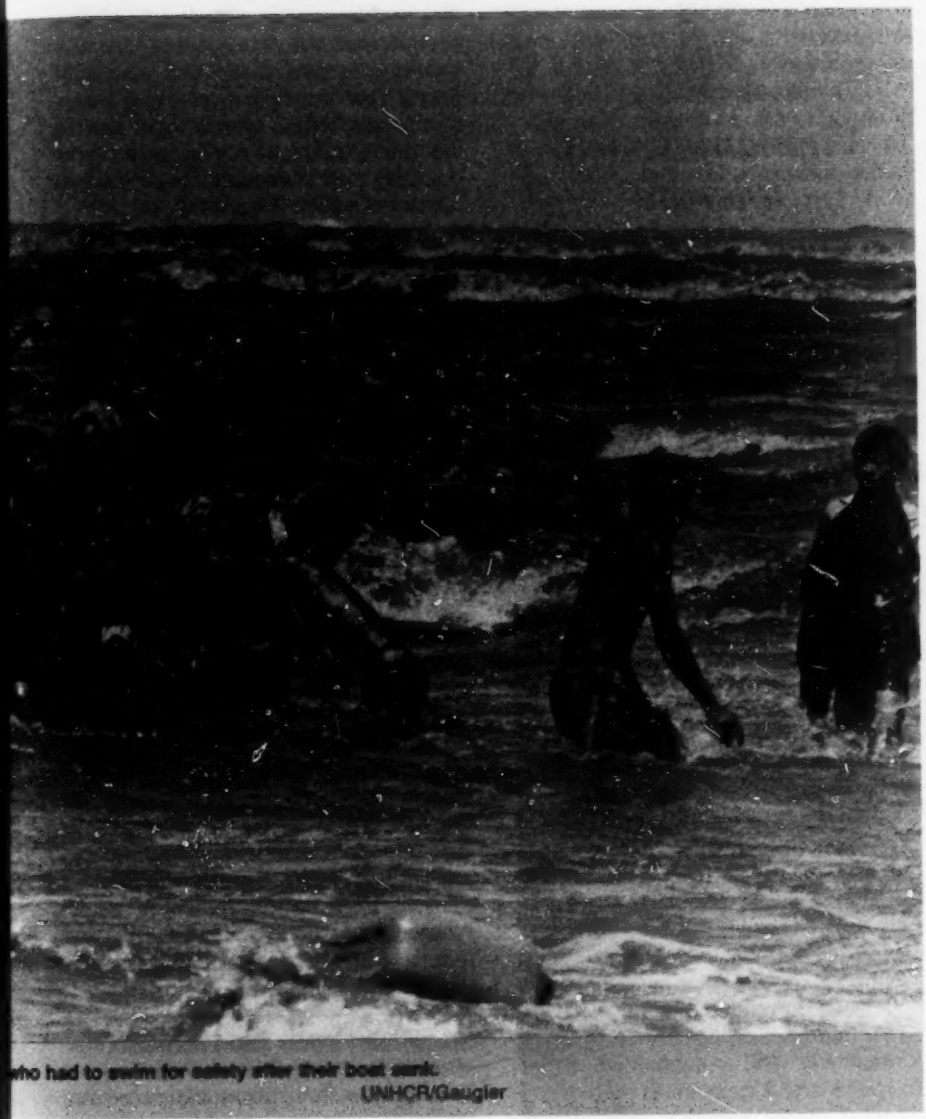
But the prevalence of these expectations forces us to look again at the premise upon which the U.S. refugee program has been operating in Southeast Asia since 1979. Resettlement has been the means, and preservation of asylum has been the end. For most Vietnamese refugees, it is the other way around.

We need to acknowledge how inappropriate, and ultimately inhumane, it is to continue to treat the Vietnamese refugee issue predominantly in an asylum context, when Vietnamese are not seeking asylum, but resettlement. As the flows have continued, more resettlement has been the price exacted to preserve asylum. Then, as resettlement opportunities inevitably diminish over time, and the flows rise and fall but show no sign of stopping, asylum commitments are revoked or diluted, leading to inhumane treatment, violence, and death.

Resettlement has been achieved safely and directly from Vietnam through ODP for more than 150,000 people. But, at least for the U.S. program, the lack of full and consistent cooperation between the United States and Vietnam has prevented the program from reaching its full potential. A UN report issued just after the 1979 Geneva conference stated that both UNHCR and Vietnam "are expecting 5,000 or 6,000 departures a month once the arrangements have become fully operational." In fact, worldwide ODP departure figures have never reached half that rate, nor have they ever exceeded the resettlement rates of Vietnamese in first-asylum countries.

Given this imbalance, it is not surprising that the boat flows continue. Evidence suggests that Vietnamese will tolerate persecution, discrimination, and poverty for years if they feel that they can ultimately leave through ODP. But the waiting becomes intolerable when

Three Vietnamese refugees are among 162 peop



who had to swim for safety after their boat sank.
UNHCR/Gaugler

resettlement from asylum countries appears swift and virtually certain for those with ties to the West.

The cruel catch is that boat refugees first must survive the trip. Piracy and pushbacks may have added tens of thousands to the death toll, but the boat journey itself is an inherently dangerous one. This is what must stop, not through pushbacks or other harsh deterrent measures, but through a real diversion of the outflow into orderly migration channels.

The need is vital as ever before to preserve asylum—temporary safe haven in humane conditions until the opportunity exists to return home safely or a more durable solution can be found—for those who seek it. But asylum should be available on its own terms, not secured through large-scale resettlement. By the same token, resettlement should be available to the fullest extent possible without the need to reach asylum countries first.

The only way to achieve both of those goals for Vietnamese is through a renewed international commitment to the Orderly Departure Program, one that will accommodate at least 50,000 migrants for each of the next three years. ODP is already safer than clandestine flight, but only when it is consistently more reliable, inclusive, and expeditious than resettlement from asylum countries can unauthorized outflows be expected to diminish and, eventually, stop altogether.

Since its inception in June 1979, the ODP has provided an avenue for more than 150,000 Vietnamese to migrate safely. More than 68,000 of these have come to the United States via ODP, with the rest divided among some 30 other countries.

There are two basic migration tracks in the U.S. ODP program. From 1985 until 1989, the refugee track was limited to no more than 8,500 per year. Historically, the refugee track within ODP has included a predominance of family reunification cases, along with former U.S. government employees and associates, Amerasians, and some former political prisoners. About 20,000 people have left Vietnam through the nonrefugee ODP track—primarily immigrant visa holders, American citizens, and a very small number of humanitarian parole cases.

In early 1988, the U.S. and Vietnamese governments began to expedite the movement of Amerasians. Under special two-year legislation, the United States is expected to admit up to 30,000 Amerasians and their family members by March 1990. These individuals enter with immigrant visas, but have access to full refugee benefits, so while their admissions numbers are not charged to the refugee ceiling, their budgetary impact on overseas and domestic programs is the same as a refugee's.

The U.S. ODP ceiling for 1989 was originally set at 25,000, almost three times its size the previous year, and included admissions slots for 13,000 refugees and 12,000 Amerasians. Although some argued that the inclusion of Amerasians was inappropriate, given their new immigrant status, these higher numbers were still a very encouraging sign that the United States was finally getting down to business with Vietnam on widening orderly migration channels.

In mid-December, however, the State Department initiated a transfer of 5,500 numbers from the ODP ceiling to accommodate additional resettlement needs in the Soviet Union. The official rationale for this transfer was that the numbers would not be used this year, in part because of the continued inability of the U.S. and Vietnamese governments to reach an agreement on the migration of reeducation camp prisoners.

A transfer of such large numbers out of ODP sends a terribly dangerous signal to Vietnam, to asylum countries in the region, and to our resettlement partners, that U.S. commitments on orderly migration simply cannot be counted on. The timing of this message, furthermore, could not be worse, given the upcoming international conference.

Last summer, the two governments

appeared tantalizingly close to an agreement that would have allowed perhaps 50,000 former political prisoners and their families to emigrate. But in August, Vietnam suspended the discussions, citing what they called a "hostile" policy statement by a senior State Department official.

An agreement yet may be reached this year, but it seems counterproductive at best to be giving away numbers that already are committed and in hand for such a purpose. Reeducation camp prisoners have suffered a great deal already for their political views and affiliations. They and their families remain stigmatized in the new society, most seek to leave Vietnam, and, of most urgent concern, they have shown that they will depart clandestinely if they cannot do so legally.

In dealing with Vietnam, the Bush Administration should give immediate priority to the successful conclusion of a political prisoner migration agreement. Taking the Amerasian accord as a model, a legislative proposal might well achieve a breakthrough in bilateral negotiations, if it could establish a special initiative with its own procedures, funding, and timetable.

Also within the massive U.S. ODP files are the names of more than 60,000 people who are immediate relatives (spouses, parents, and unmarried minor children) of U.S. citizens, or who have current or near-current immigrant visa numbers. Over 20,000 of these could emigrate each year under U.S. law, but they have been stuck in basically the same queue as 700,000 other ODP applicants. Persons holding exit permits since 1985 are only now being interviewed for departure, so it is not surprising that many people gave up on the program and escaped. In November, however, Vietnamese authorities released the names of thousands of people available for U.S. interviewing, of whom fully two-thirds were eligible for immigrant visas either immediately or within one year. This is a very hopeful sign that the refugee and immigrant tracks finally may be coming disentangled.

The Orderly Departure Program has been hampered by frequent logistical logjams, political bickering, and unannounced policy shifts, all of which must be overcome if ODP is to be reestablished as a credible alternative to clandestine departure. The critical next step will be to secure and maintain

Vietnamese will tolerate persecution, discrimination, and poverty for years if they feel they can ultimately leave through ODP.

generous ODP numbers worldwide, both for refugees and, increasingly, for immigrants.

Resettlement Cannot Stand Alone

It should never be forgotten that the use of resettlement as a protection mechanism in Southeast Asia has protected countless lives in the last decade. But it was never designed to stand alone indefinitely. Particularly in today's environment, refugee resettlement cannot fully secure protection, nor preserve asylum on its own. Orderly migration programs are the obvious and most direct way to reduce uncontrolled outflows; their success has been proven for Vietnamese, and potential exists for Laotians and Cambodians. Other regional solutions, including valid screening procedures, local settlement, and safe repatriation, are needed as well. With these, it may finally be possible to preserve asylum, free of the necessity for sustained, large-scale international resettlement.

Even as humane solutions for refugees in Southeast Asia must be increasingly independent from resettlement, it nevertheless remains a vital piece of the regional puzzle. Resettlement of Vietnamese refugees most certainly will continue, but it must be predicated on an international commitment to ensure that, from now until the boat flows end, total ODP departures each year will exceed by a substantial margin resettlement departures of Vietnamese in first-asylum countries. By the same token, ODP criteria for refugees, immigrants, or parolees must be more generous than the resettlement criteria that apply in the first-asylum camps. It should be expected that the truly desperate may continue to flee, but those who seek resettlement must be given every incentive to use orderly migration channels, and every humane disincentive from pursuing resettlement through dangerous, clandestine departures.

Finally, there is the issue of the longstayers, who have either been rejected or declared ineligible for overseas resettlement. In discussing possible resettlement options for this group, we should not include those who do not seek such an alternative. Among those who *do* seek resettlement are Vietnamese land and boat refugees, Cambodians in Khao I Dang, most lowland Lao, and some percentage of highland Lao. Most of these fall into the P-6 priority group, those with no ties to the United States.

It is clear that no single country will be willing to absorb large numbers of longstayers on top of ODP and other resettlement commitments. An international "sharing-out" will be necessary, perhaps under relaxed processing guidelines. For those who are rejected for resettlement as refugees, special humanitarian parole programs may be needed. It is vital that any longstayer resettlement program is implemented in such a way and at such a time that it does not trigger a new outflow of people whose goal and only immediate alternative appear to be resettlement.

Screening Pitfalls and Promise

In the past three years, two screening programs have been established for Indochinese refugees: in Thailand for Laotian asylum seekers, and in Hong Kong for Vietnamese boat people. In each case, the host government has asserted its right to make refugee determinations, but has permitted UNHCR to monitor the process and submit appeals. Prior to these programs, both Laotians and Vietnamese enjoyed *prima facie* refugee status as soon as they were registered in UNHCR-sponsored camps.

There are many good reasons to worry at the advent of screening programs in the region. Hong Kong insists that its interviewing criteria and procedures are consistent with UNHCR guidelines, but serious shortcomings still existed at the end of the year. Conditions in the detention centers, while improving, remain overcrowded and inhumane. And most troubling of all is the prospect of

indefinite detention of the screened-out, pending their return to Vietnam. In Thailand, lack of access may be the worst problem, but the screening program is also plagued by extortion, bribery, and a misplaced emphasis on immigration, rather than refugee, criteria.

Without discounting these concerns, the institution of local screening programs must be seen as an inevitable and legitimate development in response to continuing refugee flows. UNHCR participates in, and monitors, refugee status determination procedures throughout the world, and acknowledges the sovereign right of nations to establish such programs.

Since 1979, the willingness of the asylum countries in the region to allow *prima facie* refugee status for all Indochinese arrivals has been predicated on the assumption that all of the arrivals eventually will be resettled elsewhere. This equation has omitted the possibility of refugees who do not seek or will not be granted resettlement, or the possibility of nonrefugees who leave their country for reasons other than a well-founded fear of persecution. Now, as it has become increasingly clear that resettlement will not be offered to every arrival and may even be perpetuating the outflows, asylum countries threaten to turn full circle and declare that *nobody* is a refugee.

Screening programs, with all the pitfalls they present, may be the only workable alternative to a total breakdown in asylum. The countries in Southeast Asia have been signalling their growing impatience at serving as conduits in the resettlement pipeline. They want the refugee flows to stop. Effective but totally unacceptable means to stem the flow have included pushbacks, inhumane detention, and abusive treatment. Regional screening mechanisms will not stop refugee movements, nor should they be designed to, but they do offer an alternative to inhumane deterrence practices.

UNHCR and most of the resettlement countries would prefer to see screening programs established in the region for Vietnamese asylum seekers, so long as they are in keeping with UNHCR guidelines. Hong Kong instituted a screening program on June 16, 1988, and Malaysia announced in December that it would adopt screening mechanisms in 1989, but so far the other countries of asylum remain reluctant to undertake this step, arguing that screening would leave them with a residual population of nonrefugees for whom the international community would feel no responsibility.

The only answer to that concern, at the moment, is not a promise of eventual resettlement for everyone, which would simply perpetuate the deadly treadmill we are on, but an international commitment to a sustained search for an ultimately durable solution, be it resettlement of some in nonrefugee categories, limited local settlement, or safe repatriation.

This Vietnamese family, photographed on their arrival in Hong Kong, was among the first to be threatened with deportation under Hong Kong's tightened screening of refugees in 1988. UPI

Repatriation Must Be Safe

Thus far, voluntary repatriation has been an alternative selected by only a small number of Indochinese refugees. Since 1980, a total of 12,159 refugees in Thailand have returned to Cambodia and Laos under the auspices of UNHCR, although tens of thousands are estimated to have returned home unofficially in that time. Only a handful of Vietnamese have opted to go home.

The fact that voluntary repatriation is, and may remain for some time, a limited alternative should not prevent UNHCR and the international community from promoting it. The right of a citizen to return home is as fundamental as the right to seek asylum or to emigrate.

There is some reason to think that voluntary repatriation for Vietnamese may become more viable, as new arrivals in asylum countries come to realize that resettlement simply is not available for all who leave. In December, Vietnam and UNHCR signed an agreement on voluntary repatriation, under which the Vietnamese government gave assurances that those who wished to return could go back to their home towns without fear of punishment or discrimination. Such a promise, of course, is not sufficient in itself, but it is a beginning. About 300 Vietnamese in Hong Kong have elected to return, since screening was instituted there in June. UNHCR needs to be closely involved, in Hong Kong and in other asylum countries, to ensure that the repatriation process is fully voluntary and safe, and that it results in successful reintegration for all participants.

The option of involuntary return is also being considered for screened-out Vietnamese in Hong Kong and, indeed, has already been exercised for some 44 screened-out Lao in 1987 and 1988. The fundamental question being debated in the region is: can involuntary return be carried out in such a way that it does not constitute *refoulement*, the forced return of a refugee to a country where that person's life or freedom would be threatened on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion?

Examining this question in the context of the international legal instruments relating to refugees, the answer is yes, but only if two critical conditions are met. First, the individual must be determined, in a fair and impartial hearing carried out with UNHCR guidelines and participation, not to be a refugee. Second, the person's country of origin must provide a guarantee, verifiable through international monitoring, that the returnee will not be subject to reprisals or other human rights violations.

In a recent critique of the Hong Kong screening program, the Indochina Resource Action Center made numerous recommendations to the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Vietnam, and UNHCR to improve the screening process and to establish acceptable conditions for repatriating those determined not to be refugees. The screening recommendations, which could serve as guidelines for the region, include: pre-interview guidance and assistance to asylum seekers; certification for all government and UNHCR interpreters; provision of UNHCR legal assistance and monitoring; maintenance of interview records; and provision of the right to administrative appeal and judicial review.

The fact that Vietnamese feel they must choose dangerous, clandestine flight on the high seas instead of a safe and orderly departure goes to the heart of this refugee crisis.

As for repatriation, the recommendations include: provision of temporary refuge to all who lack the protection of the Vietnamese government; and the establishment of a tripartite commission involving UNHCR, the UK and Hong Kong governments, and Vietnam to negotiate repatriation terms, which, at minimum, would include binding commitments from Vietnam not to penalize returnees and to allow UNHCR monitoring, and an agreement from UNHCR to provide reintegration assistance.

Protection Comes First

In any acceptable configuration in Southeast Asia, protection of refugees and asylum seekers will require renewed commitments from all concerned, including the asylum countries, resettlement and UN donor countries, and the three Indochinese states.

The asylum countries must acknowledge their responsibility to provide all asylum seekers temporary safe haven, a chance to establish their refugee *bona fides* in a fair and impartial hearing, and humane living conditions pending a durable solution. They must stop threatening pushbacks and *refoulement* whenever it appears resettlement commitments are flagging, but instead, allow time for orderly departure programs, screening, and safe repatriation efforts to take effect.

Resettlement and UN donor countries, for their part, must commit substantial resources, political and financial, to orderly migration programs, first in Vietnam and Laos, and then in Cambodia, pending a settlement of the conflict there. International support must also be available to the asylum countries to help maintain safe and humane living conditions, particularly for those whose wish or only alternative is eventually to return home. Resettlement from asylum countries will need to continue, but not as a substitute for orderly migration programs or as the sole element in an open-ended equation to preserve asylum.

Finally, the Indochinese states must acknowledge the fundamental right of all people to the protection of their own government. They must abolish the laws and practices that promote discrimination against such groups as ethnic minorities, religious groups, and former reeducation camp prisoners. And before any safe repatriation can take place, voluntary or otherwise, Vietnam must remove from its books and its practices the imposition of criminal penalties on illegal departures.

A comprehensive and more balanced approach to refugee problems in Southeast Asia calls for reinvigorated commitments within the region and throughout the world to create a full range of humane alternatives to the destruction and despair of a continued refugee exodus. If we err at all this time, let it be from trying too much, not too little too late.

Refugees: A Barometer of Genocide

Bill Frelick

Dinkas and Kurds. Despite increased news coverage in 1988, the names of these groups are still virtually unknown to the general public. Neither has much of a following outside its respective homeland in the regions of Sudan and Iraq. As isolated ethnic groups in far off places, they engender little interest.

Aside from their obscurity, Kurds and Dinkas have something else in common. They share the unfortunate distinction of being among the groups most threatened with genocide in the world today. Tens, even hundreds of thousands of their numbers are believed to have been killed during 1988. Many tens of thousands more have been internally displaced within Sudan and Iraq, either—as in the case of some Dinkas—to flee to safer areas, or—in the case of the Kurds—to be pushed out of the areas from which they have drawn their strength.

The governments of Sudan and Iraq have something in common, too. Powerful elements in these governments seem to share a common objective to consolidate their own power by repressing these troublesome ethnic groups who have their own political aspirations. The responses of the military forces of Sudan and Iraq have far exceeded the suppression of armed rebels, and have extended to large-scale attacks on unarmed civilians. Their intentions appear to have been to wipe out the distinctive political identity of each ethnic group, with the result that they are often stripped of their cultural and social cohesiveness as well; their ethnicity is denied expression, and its meaning for present and future generations is threatened. If destroying the unity of a group requires wiping out not only the symbols of ethnic identity and power, but also the destruction of homes and the killing or exiling of large numbers of actual people, so be it.

Massacres of these groups in 1988 are not isolated occurrences, but part of a pattern of persecution that lends credence to the worst fears. In 1975, after American-supplied arms to the Kurds were abruptly shut off by the Shah of Iran, the Iraqis were able to crack down on the Kurds with impunity. Hundreds of Kurdish villages were destroyed in an effort to scatter the Kurds and prevent them from consolidating political power. This pattern of destruction of villages and "relocation" of Kurds to non-Kurdish areas of Iraq continued in the 1980s. In Sudan, the Arabized northerners have, for centuries, attempted to dominate the African southerners, including the Dinka, who have traditionally been targeted for abduction and

More than 250,000 Dinkas died as a result of civil war in the Sudan in 1988. Only when *homicide*—the killing of one—becomes real to us can we begin to fathom the meaning of *genocide*. House Select Committee on Hunger/J. Clark

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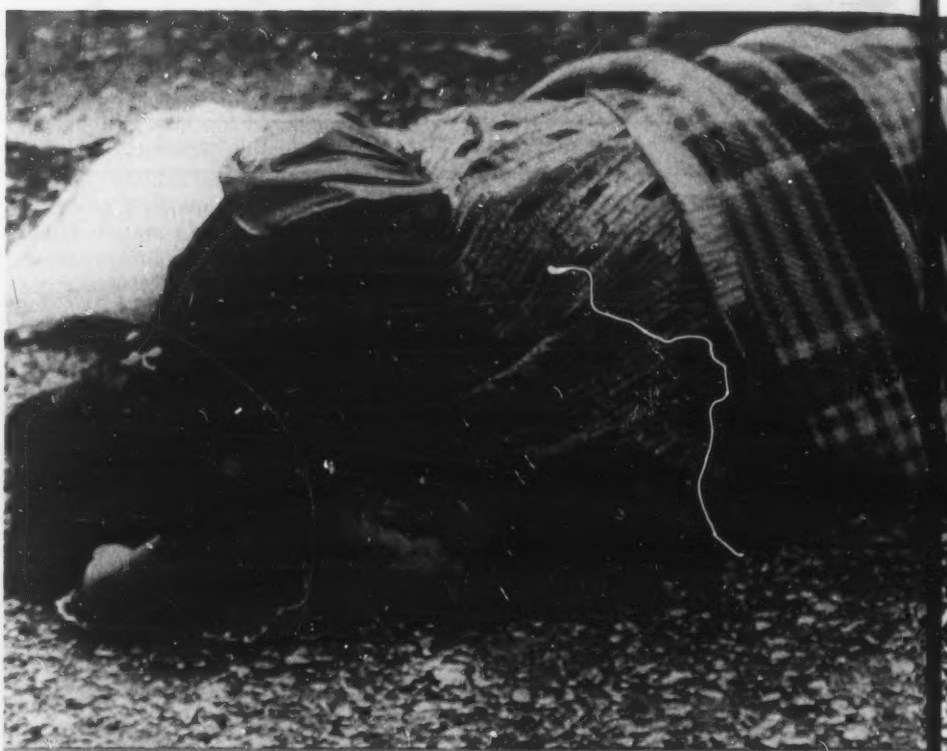
sold into slavery. After independence in 1955, a brutal civil war ensued in which several hundred thousand people are estimated to have been killed, and a million southerners forced to flee the country. Large numbers of southerners were massacred, tortured, or imprisoned. The renewal of civil war in recent years follows the earlier pattern: Khartoum has exploited centuries-old traditional ethnic rivalries, by arming other "African" ethnic groups, the Mundari, the Nuer, and the Fertit, who not only have killed thousands of Dinkas outright, but who have looted and stolen the cattle that have comprised the backbone of the Dinkas' pastoral economy, destroyed crops, prevented new crops from being planted, and attacked food convoys. Also armed have been "arabized" groups, such as the Rizeigaat, who not only have perpetrated massacres against the Dinkas, but have renewed the practice of abducting Dinka children and selling them into slavery.

As repression and violence escalated again in 1988, both governments prevented international observers from entering their countries to investigate the allegations of widespread, systematic murder. Iraq said it would not allow a UN team to investigate allegations that its government had used chemical weapons against the Kurdish population, saying, "This is an Iraqi issue, a domestic issue, not an international one." The Sudanese government in Khartoum has threatened to kick international humanitarian agencies operating in the north out of the country if they venture into the south. Blocking relief efforts achieves the dual objective of destroying the Dinkas by starvation and also of concealing this practice from the outside world.

A Veil of Secrecy

Every genocide in recent history has taken place under a veil of secrecy. To this day, Turkey denies slaughtering more than a million Armenians at the turn of the century. The Nazi death camps were not revealed until their liberation. When the Indonesians killed an estimated 10 to 30 percent of the population of East Timor in the mid-1970s, they were careful to keep the doors closed. Other large scale massacres, such as that which destroyed the "kulaks" in the Soviet Union in the time of Josef Stalin, have been kept largely under wraps to this day.



Five thousand Kurdish civilians in the Iraqi town of Halabja died in a May 1988 chemical attack, and autumn, with thousands more deaths, and tens of thousands of additional refugees.

Even when word seeps out that genocide is occurring, the world is slow to believe. When the Khmer Rouge controlled Cambodia, journalists parked across the border in Thailand interviewed refugee survivors of the ongoing holocaust. At the time, however, critics dismissed their reports as exaggerated, saying that refugee testimonials were unreliable and impossible to corroborate. By the time Pol Pot was driven into the hills and the Vietnamese saw it in their interest to open the "killing fields" to the outside world, it was too late.

Many reasons have been suggested for our disbelief or our failure to respond. Perhaps we are inured to tales of third-world suffering—starvation in Biafra yesterday; flooding and disease in Bangladesh today. Rather than disbelieving accounts of mass atrocities, we simply don't react to them. We no longer have room in our hearts to accommodate the world's suffering, especially when we believe that nothing we feel or do will make a difference anyway.

Keeping Genocide at Arms Length

Perhaps we are *ethnocentropathic*, to coin a term, caring only for our own kind, members of our own race, religion, nationality—our own tribe. There are plenty of times when our hearts pour out, times when we have no leverage whatsoever to improve a situation. When a toddler fell into a well in Texas not too long ago, Americans shared the anguish of her parents and tuned in hourly to find out whether she had been rescued. The pain and anxiety were felt vicariously. But objectively, if objectivity is possible, how does that accidental situation involving a single child compare to the horrors being consciously and systematically committed against hundreds of thousands of children elsewhere?

Perhaps it is the sheer numbers involved in genocide, literally the "murder of a race" or a people, that keep us from responding. The murder of six million Jews by the Nazis threatens to become an abstraction because our minds cannot fathom six million individual persons, each with his or her own distinct identity.

But all of these possible explanations assume that genocide can be kept at least at arms length. It does not directly confront us. From the point of view of preventing genocide—or at least of curbing it—as an ongoing occurrence, not as an abstract idea or an historical remembrance, not only do we need to seek the truth, but also to search for ways to

tens of thousands fled into Iran. Chemical attacks and systematic destruction continued through
Sipa Press/Ozturk

break through the barriers to belief. People seem especially reluctant to see genocide as a contemporary reality. It is something long ago or far away, perhaps even *sui generis*, as the Holocaust is often framed. Our tendency, it seems, is to search for a reason not to believe.

This brings us back to the veil of secrecy. The absence of objective first-person observers to record actual killings always provides room for doubt. We seem inclined to wait for "objective facts" before being moved to respond. To establish that the problem is genocide, each incident calls for documentation, each killing standing as a separate fact, and then, these discrete, individual facts must be understood as a totality fitting into a pattern of intent on the part of the persecutors to destroy a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. We are understandably reluctant to use the term *genocide* lightly. We don't want to cheapen its meaning to those who have been its victims. On the other hand, given the reality that no one committing genocide is going to allow independent witnesses to record it, are we necessarily taking the use of the term out of the hands of those in the contemporary political arena, who could work to bring pressure to bear to stop massive human rights violations, and consigning it only to the rarified world of the historian?

At what point can a contemporary observer accurately show that persecution has become genocide? Was that point reached in 1988 in the cases of Sudan and Iraq? How does one establish the truth of "facts" in the absence of first-person observation and documentation?

The intent of the perpetrator of genocide is often as difficult to establish as is the act itself. Yet, at least in terms of the UN *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, the charge of genocide has meaning only when there is an established intent to destroy, in whole or in part, the group in question. Rarely is the intent so clearly articulated as when Hujjatu'l-Islam Qazai, president of the revolutionary court in Shiraz, Iran, justified the destruction of Iran's Baha'i community by declaring:

> The Iranian nation has determined to establish the government of God on earth. Therefore, it cannot tolerate the perverted Baha'is who are instruments of Satan and the followers of the devil and of the super powers and their agents. . . . It is absolutely certain that in the Islamic Republic of Iran there is no place for Baha'is and Baha'ism. . . . Before it is too late the Baha'is should recant Baha'ism, which is condemned by reason and logic. Otherwise, the day will soon come when the Islamic nation will deal with them in accordance with its religious obligations, as it has dealt with other hypocrites. . . . The Muslim nation will, God willing, fulfill the prayer of Noah [from the Koran]: 'And Noah said, Lord, leave not a single family of Infidels on the Earth: For if thou leave them, they will beguile thy servants and will beget only sinners, infidels.'

On the contrary, the normal practice is for governments engaged in massive repression to minimize the situation, deny the worst allegations, and even to declare amnesties and to say that normalcy has been restored. Typical of this response, is an interview on September 9, 1988 with President Saddam Hussein of Iraq:

> This is what is happening. A group of collaborators was used by Iran along with its occupation army to harm Iraq's military efforts in northern Iraq. When the Iranian Army was expelled from the borders, naturally this group of collaborators lost any military might that would make it capable of confronting our Army. Therefore, it collapsed. And when our Army advanced toward the Turkish borders to purge areas there of their remnants, they used threats to intimidate some villages, telling them that the Iraqi Army would allegedly think of them as outlaws. However, there is nothing in the history of the Iraqi Army even in the worst cases in which it harmed a child, a woman, or an old man or perpetrated a similar practice. Some of these village residents escaped or entered Turkish territory under the duress of the saboteurs, who sought to use them to protect themselves from any Army strikes, considering that they have children and women and also for other motives.
>
> Hence, after Iraq had affirmed its strength and capability, it announced an amnesty that even included the sabotage leaders. I think that you heard of the amnesty. It is a complete and comprehensive amnesty, which is to be enjoyed by all except one man.

According to Saddam Hussein's version, the Kurds fled under duress from threats and intimidation from saboteurs and collaborators. No mention is made of destroyed villages; certainly nothing about chemical attacks; and although he admits that the army advanced towards the border, he does not acknowledge that the Iraqi military even engaged them in hostilities. There certainly is no expressed intent to destroy the Kurds. In fact, he extends an amnesty to those who have fled.

Intent is difficult to pin down even when the perpetrators are silent; it is all the more difficult when they are en-

gaged in sophisticated denials. In such cases, the pattern of abuse is an important factor for consideration. President Hussein's assertion that "there is nothing in the history of the Iraqi Army even in the worst cases in which it harmed a child, a woman, or an old man" is readily challenged by the photos of Halabja following the chemical attack in May. But an historical pattern emerges as well. In the summer of 1987, reports were circulating that one hundred Kurdish villages had been destroyed by bombing and chemical weapons and that their inhabitants—12,500 families by some accounts—were forced into resettlement camps in the southern, non-Kurdish region. The remains of vacated villages were reportedly dynamited and bulldozed. The accounts of mass destruction and displacement in 1987 and 1988 are consistent with Kurdish reports of the Iraqi response to the aborted Kurdish uprising of 1974 and following the withdrawal of Iranian forces following an earlier incursion in 1983. The more recent accounts differ only in the allegation of the use of chemical weapons against the civilian population.

Credibility of Refugee Testimonials

But here, as well, the inference about intent is built on a shaky foundation of refugee testimonials. Iraq did not host guided tours of abandoned villages. In fact, they did fly journalists by helicopter over areas where calm seemed to prevail. Those villages allegedly abandoned have also reportedly been bulldozed out of existence. The trail is hard to discern.

So the need is to look at the refugee testimonials themselves, remaining aware that these are highly personal accounts, with the limitations such individual perspectives naturally entail. How is credibility established? One important indication is quantitative. Refugees truly "vote with their feet." When in excess of 50,000 Kurds cross into Turkey as a sudden influx, especially when such flight is not typical of previous responses to crackdowns by the Iraqi regime, the numbers alone underscore the testimonials. The same can be said for the 84,000 refugees, the vast majority of whom are Dinkas, who fled into Ethiopia in 1988.

In 1985, William Stanley, a statistician from M.I.T., used multivariate regression analysis to show a close correlation between refugee flows out of El Salvador and political violence in that country. What Stanley found in the case of El Salvador could be replicated many times over. In many cases, refugees are the measure of genocide in the making, a barometer of repression that provides warning that something so dangerous is happening as to require people to flee their homes and country. This is especially true in the absence of independent observers to record the human rights situation within those countries. It doesn't take a statistician to tell us that three million Afghan refugees in Pakistan and another two million in Iran mean that something is seriously wrong in Afghanistan.

But, as Arthur Koestler once commented, "Statistics don't bleed." The numbers tell a story. They can be compelling. But they only tell the broad outlines of the story. A focus on numbers alone can also be misleading. While a mass exodus is a good indication of a serious problem, the absence of a mass exodus does not mean that genocide is not occurring. In some of the worst genocidal situations—the Holocaust is the prime example—the determination to destroy the victim group is so strong that routes of escape are blocked and refugee flows prevented from occurring.

Whether the refugee numbers are large or small, however, the refugee testimonials themselves provide vital information about ongoing genocide. Political reality is such that the final analysis of their accuracy will be left to the historians. But there are certain factors to consider in assessing their credibility that need not wait for the historian's judgment. In practical terms, the credibility of the refugee rests largely on the credibility of the interviewer. If interviews are conducted in the presence of a group, for example, they are likely to result in a group consensus, not an individual account about the experiences that led the refugee to flee. In the presence of a group of his compatriots, a refugee is less likely to contradict what others in the group are saying. The tendency, rather, will be to corroborate each other's stories.

Testimonials are more likely to be accurate the more recently the refugee arrived from his homeland. Refugees who have been in camps for longer periods of time are more likely to succumb to the temptation to mythologize or exaggerate experiences to suit the psychological and political needs of life in exile. Recent arrivals are more likely to recount their experiences straightforwardly as discrete experiences without attempting to filter them with their own interpretations or by resolving what may seem to them to be contradictions that don't fit their notion of how the reality of the home situation should be presented.

Refugees tend to be fearful. They have often experienced trauma in the home country and acutely feel uncertainty about their fate in the country of asylum. The interviewer needs to be aware that the refugee is a survivor and is still engaged in a continuing effort to survive even as the interview is taking place. This can result either in understating the situation in the home country—for fear that their testimony might somehow be leaked back home—or in overstating the situation—out of a desire to "pass the test" and not be returned home, or even to be considered for the safety of resettlement in a third country. The refugee might try to anticipate what he thinks the interviewer wants to hear, and answer accordingly. Interviews of refugees often do take place in the context of screening for refugee status, or by journalists who might not take adequate care to ensure that testimonies are taken individually and corroborated.

Establishing Trust

Given the circumstances in which refugee interviews are likely to take place, it is essential to try to establish a level of trust between the interviewer and the refugee. At the minimum, this should require that interviews be conducted individually with assurances that confidentiality be respected. Cultural sensitivity, fluency of language, or competency of translators, and specificity of questions all contribute to the value of the interview. If the refugee is suspicious of the translator, the interview will never get off the ground. Particular care should be taken to choose translators in politically neutral roles, such as health care workers or persons affiliated with relief or religious organizations. Translators should be sought who speak the native language of the refugee, not simply another language that the refugee might understand. Tape recordings of the interviews are valuable not only for a complete historical record, but also as a means of later checking the accuracy of translations in the field.

It is helpful to start the interviews by asking about the family before the refugee-causing situation began, both to

establish trust and rapport with the refugee by showing a concern about his or her own life and situation, but also because it provides a baseline of comparison to the time when the situation deteriorated. It also keeps the refugee narrowly focused on his or her own experiences and observations. During the course of the interview, the same key questions should be asked in several different contexts to provide an internal check on the accuracy of the interview.

The interviewer also needs an awareness of the level of sophistication of the refugees being interviewed. An educated refugee leader might be more articulate than his cohorts, but not necessarily more accurate in recounting the situation in the homeland. An illiterate refugee, on the other hand, can often provide extremely important information, but might be vague about numbers or in identifying the dates when incidents occurred. Such refugees might profitably be encouraged to draw pictures to diagram key experiences, or to track events by seasonal agricultural cycles. Every effort needs to be made to understand the culture of the refugees and to encourage them to communicate their experiences as fully, but as comfortably, as possible. Interviews of refugee women are often the most challenging and difficult, as the traumatic experiences they have encountered often involve sexual assault or other sensitive and personal matters considered to be taboo subjects of discussion, particularly with a male. Yet, especially when interviewed by a woman, female refugees often give fresh and important insights overlooked by their male companions. While male members of the interview team can act as a "lightning rod" for officials, refugee leaders, and others more inclined to talk about politics and other matters, the female interviewer is frequently left unencumbered to talk privately and in detail about the refugee experience.

In addition to the quality of the interviews, the quantity of interviews can also be an important factor for determining with accuracy the situation in the home country. Contradictions and concurrences are better able to be established with more interviews. The more witnesses independently interviewed on a given episode, the more accurately it can be reconstructed. In addition, at least some random samples in the interviewing process help to ensure a cross-section of accounts. At the same time, it is useful within the random sample to interview family units who have shared the same experiences, and whose accounts can be cross-checked.

Refugees are living Anne Franks. Only when we mourn a single victim, can we begin to comprehend the enormity of the crime.

Where possible, refugees should be interviewed in different locations. Sometimes the distance between refugee camps or difficulties in communication from one refugee settlement to another enable the interviewer to cross-check refugee accounts. If a refugee testimonial in one camp can be corroborated by refugees in other locations, especially where the opportunity to communicate between camps is remote, the credibility of the testimony is greatly enhanced. It is also helpful to interview refugees who arrived from different locations within the home country.

Other objective measures about refugee conditions also can play a critical role in determining whether genocide is occurring. Medical evidence about the condition of the refugees can be essential. It was all the more frustrating in the case of the recent Kurdish exodus, that Turkey, which had its own reasons for minimizing the Kurdish situation, did not give international medical personnel adequate access to the refugees.

The Human Face of Genocide

While it may be that the particular individual perspective of survivors makes it difficult for them to tell their story in all its complexity and with objective accuracy—as in doubt concerning the yellow rain sagas of Hmong refugees fleeing from Laos—the refugee accounts nevertheless provide not only the bare-boned facts, not only the eyewitness testimony we so crave to determine what really happened; they also provide a human face.

That human face conveys the reality of genocide. If we are to do anything with this information, if we are to stop genocide in its tracks at the time it is occurring, the information needs to break through the barriers of disbelief and apathy.

The impact of genocide becomes real the moment homicide becomes reality. We can better comprehend one murder than the murder of thousands. The Nazi Holocaust becomes real to us through the person of Anne Frank. One cannot read her words without mourning her death. Only when we mourn a single victim, can we begin to comprehend the enormity of the crime.

Refugees are the living Anne Franks. They call for our response. The scarred and blistered skin of Kurdish women and children or the emaciated bodies of starving Dinkas tell us most clearly that lives are in danger. The fact of their flight itself testifies to that, and their words can and should be weighed in determining the situation they have fled. When this evidence is striking, and when it fits into a pattern of conduct toward the refugee groups in question such that intent to destroy them can be reasonably inferred, then the situation is well enough established to invoke the word *genocide*, at least as a threatened occurrence. We certainly should not use the term lightly. But also, if we are serious about preventing genocide, we should not shy away from talking about the threat of genocide in specific ongoing situations that warrant an extraordinary humanitarian response.

Internal Refugees—The Hidden Half

Lance Clark

Mary Awatch now lives in the third railway car from the front of the train. From the window of the same car, a year ago, she watched a man shoot and kill two of her children during the massacre at Dhein, in southern Sudan.

The attack by the Reizegaat tribesmen took place at the railway station. It was in retaliation for an attack on the army garrison at Safaha by the Sudan People's Liberation Army. The majority of the SPLA soldiers are Dinkas, an ethnic group in southern Sudan. After burning down the only church in town, the militiamen rounded up more than 6,000 Dinka refugees and herded them into the railway station, firing rifles into the crowd.

By chance, an empty train was sitting on the tracks. Some of the Dinka refugees tried to save themselves by climbing into the train. The enraged Reizegaat set fire to it. The Dinka inside the first cars burned to death. The lucky ones in the other ten cars got the train started with the help of some railroad workers. They drove the train to Nyala, a town about 50 kilometers away, where Mary now lives.[1]

Mary and her remaining children are part of an estimated two million southern Sudanese who have fled their homes due to the civil war that is once again devastating the countryside. About 350,000 of these people have fled to Ethiopia, many arriving as walking skeletons from lack of food and water on the long trek. The rest remain inside Sudan.

Many of those in Sudan, like Mrs. Awatch, have found the places where they sought sanctuary as deadly as the places they fled. Respected groups such as Amnesty International have reported other massacres.[2] Relief officials estimate that at least 180,000 children have died during 1988 alone because of the effects of the war—the majority of these had fled their homes, but remained inside Sudan.[3]

Those with enough resources and luck have managed to reach Khartoum. Here they are free from armed attacks, and most can scratch out a way to survive. The great majority live in squatter settlements located on the fringe of the main city areas. Until recently, the response of most of their own government officials was either to ignore their presence, or to actively discourage them from staying. This included refusing to allow relief agencies to have access to many of these areas. Although these displaced Sudanese number 700,000 people, virtually no one in the outside world even noticed their existence until the great flood of August 1988. Then they were finally "discovered" by the international media who stumbled over them while covering the drama of flood relief efforts in Khartoum. Part of that story was not only that displaced southerners had suffered the most from the flood, but also that they were being denied equal access to international relief.

We cannot, and must not, continue to ignore the existence of these people and our responsibility to find ways to help them.

In late 1988, it was unclear whether a major international relief operation would finally be able to effectively reach those places in southern Sudan and in the border areas with northern Sudan where the conditions of the displaced persons are the worst. With both sides in the conflict standing accused of blocking relief aid, even the few relief sites that do exist in these areas are themselves scenes of tragedy.

One member of a United Nations-led mission to southern Kordofan "... who said he had seen many crises around the world—from the Vietnamese boat people to refugees from Afghanistan—said he had never seen anything quite as devastating as feeding time for the surviving children in Abyei [in southern Sudan]. 'The kids assemble outside a gate. The gate opens, and the kids rush in. The stronger ones push and scratch and kick to get to the front and get their bowls filled. All the while, parents are crying out from behind the fence, urging their children to get up and make it to the front. Perhaps 500 get fed. Perhaps 200 don't. On the periphery are the kids that didn't make it today. They won't make it tomorrow. They are effectively dead.' "[4]

Mary Awatch and these children in Abyei are but a small part of a huge group of people in countries from El Salvador to Afghanistan who, by most people's definition, are refugees. That is, they have been compelled to leave their homes because of a well-founded fear of persecution, because of gross human rights violations, and/or because of the effects of armed conflict. Having left their homes, they urgently need special assistance and protection.

However, because these people have not crossed an international border, they do not technically qualify as refugees under present international and regional treaties. Therefore, they are not eligible for the assistance and protection provided to international refugees—those who have crossed into another country. Instead, they are subject to the inconsistencies and slow response (and in some cases, no response at all) that characterize the ad hoc manner in which such internal refugee situations are dealt with.

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Our present international refugee system, whatever its problems, at least provides a way of recognizing the existence of a class of people, of identifying their special needs, and of mandating responsibility for meeting these needs. For people such as the southern Sudanese described above, there is no such system. Heroic efforts are now being made by a few dedicated individuals and organizations to assist them. But such efforts by themselves cannot do much to prevent relief and protection from coming too little, too late for the next Sudan, any more than such efforts in earlier instances—such as Ethiopia in 1985 or during the Biafra war—have significantly mitigated suffering in Sudan today. As long as we treat each of these instances as isolated cases, and therefore continue to apply ad hoc rather than systemic responses, we are condemning millions of people every year to unnecessary suffering.

The first step towards solving this problem is to recognize that it exists. That means recognizing the existence of a class of people who are in effect *internal refugees*. It also means asking questions. How can we best define this category of people? How many of them are there? Why do they fare so badly? The answers are not simple, and often require somewhat technical discussions. However, even the relatively small amount of study which has been given to these questions, and the tentative answers proposed in this article, reinforce the same basic point: we cannot, and must not, continue to ignore the existence of these people and our responsibility to find ways to help them.

Defining and Counting Internal Refugees

Internal refugees, as the term is used in this article, are a subgroup of the larger category of internally displaced persons. Such internal displacement is caused by a range of factors, such as civil strife, armed conflict, communal violence, environmental disasters, forcible relocation by the government, and major economic change.

Who within this larger category should be considered internal refugees based on the reasons that compelled them to leave their home? One way to begin to answer this question, and one that also provides a basis for an initial calculation of the number of internal refugees, is to apply the same criteria that are used for inter-

"As long as we treat each of these instances as isolated cases . . ., we are condemning millions of people every year to unnecessary suffering." Above, a Dinka mother and child. Boston Globe/J. Knott

national refugee flows—that is, for those who have actually left their home country.

This in turn requires an understanding of how people get defined as international refugees at present. One key point is that the refugee definition has been broadened considerably over the years beyond the definition used in the original 1951 United Nations *Convention* and reaffirmed in the 1967 *Protocol*. In Africa, this broadening is primarily the result of the expanded definition contained in the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) *Convention*. This added "external aggression, occupation, foreign domination, or events seriously disturbing the public order" to the 1951 *Convention* reasons of "a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership [in] a particular social group, or political opinion" as reasons for flight that would qualify a person as a refugee.

In most situations outside of Africa, this broadening has occurred through changes in how refugee determinations are made in practice rather than through new international or regional legal instruments. Responding to the changing nature of the world and of recent refugee flows, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has in effect now accepted "severe internal upheavals or armed conflict"[5] as causes of international refugee flight. However, these changes in practice have not been applied uniformly worldwide. These variations in practices, together with the changes brought about by the OAU *Convention*, have meant that the criteria for determining who qualifies as an international refugee now vary somewhat from region to region, and even from country to country.

It is also important to recognize that most international refugees—especially those who arrive as part of large scale movements—are granted refugee status on the basis of a *mass determination*. This means that an entire category of people are accepted as refugees, rather than requiring each person to make an individual case for qualifying under the relevant statutes, even though it is understood that not each and every person fled for the same reason.

These factors make it difficult to identify a single, uniform definition of who qualifies as an international refugee based on who is actually accepted as one. Still, examining the causes of flight of the world's current internationally recognized refugee population—those receiving assistance and protection from UNHCR[6]—indicates that the primary causes are as follows: armed conflict, gross human rights violations, and/or a well-founded fear of persecution. Each year, the *World Refugee Survey* presents its summary statistics on the world's international refugees, based on who is considered a refugee in actual practice. Building on this tool, the Table on page 23 provides initial estimates for that sub-group of the world's internally displaced population that could be considered internal refugees. It primarily includes those people who appear to have moved for the same reasons as did persons recognized as international refugees in this year's *Survey*. It also includes several internal movements that were the result of armed conflicts for which there are no counterpart international flows included in the *Survey*, such as in Cyprus and Lebanon.

Fleeing Armed Conflict

A country-by-country review of the Table reveals that the great majority of both internal and international refugee flows result primarily from armed conflicts. Of these conflicts, the great majority are internal as defined by international law, although in many cases, such as in Nicaragua and Afghanistan, the conflicts have major international components as well. These observations give little optimism that there will be fewer internal refugees in the future, given the trends in the factors that link armed conflict situations to the generation of internal refugees.

During the twentieth century, armed conflicts have not only become more destructive, but the proportion of civilian casualties has also increased dramatically. While during World War I only 5 percent of the casualties were civilian, estimates were of 50 to 75 percent during World War II. In contemporary wars, the figure is typically even higher, reaching over 90 percent in some cases.[7]

This rise in the proportion of civilian casualties is partly due to changes in the methods of waging war in general. The use of such techniques as aerial attacks causes mass destruction and civilian deaths. However, it is also related to an increase in internal armed conflicts. Today, over 97 percent of all armed conflict situations are internal ones.[8]

The nature of internal conflicts increases civilian casualties partly because of the inherent difficulty in determining who is a combatant and who is a civilian. Also, a shift in the military strategy employed in most internal armed conflicts has compounded the problem of attacks on the civilian population. Historically, opposing forces often attempted to gain the support of the local population, thereby isolating the opposition. However, many military forces now see this technique as ineffective. Instead, they have adopted tactics that attempt to remove support for

Approximately 2 million Mozambicans have been

the opposing group by directly attacking those civilians they suspect of supporting, or even sympathizing with, their opponents and often by forcibly relocating such persons out of contested areas.

Another troubling point is that a fundamental underlying cause of the majority of the internal conflicts which have created internal refugees is ethnic and/or religious conflict. Like the trends in warfare, such conflicts show few signs of waning. This again leaves little room for optimism that the numbers of internal refugees will decline in the foreseeable future.

How Broad Should the Internal Refugee Category Be?

To ensure that these initial estimates are as credible as possible, a conservative approach has been taken regarding what groups to include in the Table as internal refugees. Acceptable causes of movement have been defined as the effects of armed conflict, gross human rights violations, or a well-founded fear of persecution for the reasons given in the 1951 *Convention*. However, this definition, as interpreted in the development of the Table, excludes many people whom others would argue strongly ought to be included as internal refugees.

placed within that country by civil upheaval. The Christian Science Monitor/N. Matheny

One problematic category is made up of those people who have been involuntarily relocated by their government out of their area of customary residence primarily for political reasons. The most infamous examples of such relocations were the movements of Jews and other groups to concentration camps under the Nazis and of the urban population of Cambodia to rural forced work camps by the Khmer Rouge.

The Table does *not* include "villagization" campaigns in places such as Ethiopia and Romania. In such cases, the government seeks to impose a "new order" on portions of the rural population by forcing several villages together into one consolidated village. Persons who have fled from the Ethiopian program have been given refugee status in Somalia, as have those fleeing from Romania into Hungary. However, in both cases, the villagers are typically moved several kilometers to their new village, and thus might still be considered to be within their "area of customary residence." The decision to include or exclude such cases is a major one. For example, the Ethiopian government claims already to have moved more than 10 million people through its "villagization" program and plans eventually to move a total of more than 33 million people (and to level more than 10,000 indigenous villages in the process).

This question of how far a person must have moved in order to qualify as an internal refugee is also important in deciding whether to include those forced into "fortified hamlets" by their government as part of a counterinsurgency campaign. This approach has been used by a number of governments since it was employed by the British in Malaysia after World War II.

The Table *does* include those Ethiopians who have been forcibly relocated from one region to another by the government's "resettlement program." Persons who fled to Sudan from several of these sites were in fact given international refugee status. It also includes the more than 3.5 million black South Africans compelled to move into "Bantustans" by the South African government. Both programs are considered by most observers to fall under the category of "gross human rights violations."

Some would argue that the category of internal refugees should also include situations in which people are compelled to leave their homes due to those economic development projects whose implementation in effect constitutes a gross human rights violation. One example would be certain cases of the planned colonization of "virgin" lands which are in fact occupied by indigenous peoples. The consequence of many such settlements, such as those in large areas of the Amazon basin in Brazil, is the impoverishment, displacement, and often death of the indigenous people.

It has also been argued that many so-called "economic development programs" are in effect a subtle but powerful form of ethnic conflict, intended to impoverish one ethnic group to the benefit of another. This argument contends that it is no accident that projects that displace local populations, including such apparently benign projects as dams, are often implemented by governments made up primarily of members of certain powerful ethnic groups and displace those in areas populated mostly by other, less powerful groups.

A crucial test for distinguishing a genuine development project from one that is simply a thinly disguised case of exploitation may be that of determining who benefits and who loses as a result. For example, does the local population participate fully in the benefits of the program? Is adequate compensation given to those who are displaced? Is there a well-planned and implemented resettlement program to assist these persons in starting a new life?

Obviously, more debate, discussion, and research are needed to refine the

definitions used, to identify more accurately the causes of the movements of internally displaced persons, and to generate improved statistics. Further study should be made of the nature of the relationship between internal and international flows; whether there are important demographic or economic reasons that determine who will remain in his or her country and who will leave; how long after an internal refugee has moved he or she should still be considered as displaced; and how far a person has to move in order to qualify as an internal refugee.

While the numbers and definitions used for the Table are meant to be used as starting points, and not as definitive statements, it seems reasonable to conclude that the numbers of internal refugees are comparable to, or greater than, those of international refugees.

The Level of Suffering of Internal Refugees Demands Attention

In addition to their sheer numbers, internal refugees demand our attention because of the level of suffering they bear. A quick scanning of several recent internal refugee situations may give some sense of these problems.

An estimated two million people are internal refugees inside Afghanistan. For these people, their former way of life has been replaced by the terrors of warfare and enforced city living or life in a refugee camp. Many of the internal refugees have fled to the main towns and have come under the control of the government. Others have settled in neighboring valleys, compounding the pre-existing food shortages in these areas. Many areas are overcrowded, and there has been an increase in communicable diseases. It is difficult to reach many internal refugees, much less to do an accurate census of them, because of ongoing fighting in many of the areas where they are located. In contrast to those who have fled to Pakistan, most of these people have received hardly any relief aid at all during the past nine years of the war.

There are approximately 500,000 internal refugees inside El Salvador. Many can be seen wandering the countryside in search of a secure town or settlement removed from the violence. The majority of the displaced are women and young children. The Salvadoran military regards internal refugees living outside of government camps as guerrilla

A displaced Guatemalan orphan.
Jean-Marie Simon

Who will speak on behalf of these people?

supporters or sympathizers, and often, therefore, as legitimate military targets. Church-run refugee camps, as well as sites where the International Committee of the Red Cross was providing medical care and relief supplies, have been attacked by the military.

In Ethiopia, up to one million persons are estimated to have died from the same combination of drought and inadequate famine relief (heavily related to political factors) that precipitated a major international refugee flow into Sudan in 1984–85. Most of these deaths were of internal refugees who had relocated to food distribution sites such as Korem. Many others died at home, in part because they feared being captured by the Ethiopian government and being forcibly resettled to another province if they went to a government-controlled relief camp.

Mozambique has the highest infant mortality rate in the world—almost one child in three will never reach the age of five. While Mozambique has always been a poor country, the primary cause of these death rates has been the destruction of much of the countryside and the attacks on relief convoys by RENAMO, an armed group opposed to the Mozambican government. Many refugees have fled to neighboring countries, and more than a million have become internal refugees. Malnutrition rates of internal refugee children are several times higher than the national average. Sanctuary is hardly the word to describe most of the places where they live, where "fear dominates, and it takes only the sight of an armed man to cause a headlong rush into the bush."[9]

Why Do Internal Refugees Fare So Badly?

International and internal refugees are often compelled to leave home for the same kinds of reasons. However, they differ in terms of the underlying reasons for their needing special assistance and protection. This difference has to do with where they are located, and is also the fundamental reason why the approaches to aiding the two categories may also need to be different.

A primary rationale for the existence of an international system to help international refugees is that they are unable (or, due to a well-founded fear of persecution, are unwilling) to avail themselves of the protection of their own government. While they have escaped from the problems that caused their flight, they are foreigners in another land. For this reason, special legal instruments have been developed and ratified by many countries that give these refugees special rights for their protection in the countries of asylum. These instruments also allow international organizations to provide special assistance to them.

In contrast, the problems that internal refugees face are primarily a result of their remaining inside their own country. In many cases, they still have not fully escaped the problems that initially forced them from their homes. For example, they may have fled the sites of initial attacks, but still remain in places that are subject to further violence. Also, their own government frequently fails to provide them with basic assistance and protection. One reason may be that the government simply does not have the resources required to provide

adequate relief aid. However, often, the government, or more accurately, key portions of it, such as the military or some powerful local officials, view them as sympathizers or even active supporters of opposition forces. Too often, humanitarian aid such as emergency food relief is used as a weapon by both sides in the conflict. In addition, governments often severely limit the access of international media to such persons, making it even more difficult to build any widespread pressure to help them.

Finally, unlike the case for international refugees, there is no international system in place with the responsibility to aid and protect them. Because internal refugees remain inside their country, they fall outside of the mandate of UNHCR, the main institution for assisting and protecting international refugees. UNHCR has only become involved with internally displaced persons in rare, special cases, such as when requested to use its "good offices" by the UN Secretary-General, and in some cases of repatriation of international refugees to areas where displaced persons exist as well.

Most internal refugees also fall outside the international structures that do exist to aid internally displaced persons. These structures (such as the UN Disaster Relief Organization and the relief component of the UN Development Program) deal mostly with those displaced persons whose plight is due to natural disasters, such as earthquakes or drought. In a few cases it has been possible to provide some relief aid to internal refugees through such structures by blurring the distinction between man-made and natural causes for a disaster. This happens mostly in famine situations, which often result from a mixture of both natural and man-made causes.

One institution, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), does have a limited mandate for assisting one category of internal refugees—those who flee due to armed conflict. However, even within this one category of armed conflict situations, ICRC aids a much smaller percentage of the affected persons than does UNHCR in cases of international displacement. A major reason for this difference is that even with an explicit international mandate for its work, ICRC cannot operate without the approval of the government in question. Given the politically charged nature of such conflicts, this approval is often limited or non-existent.

This points out the central problem for any international effort to aid international refugees—the *sovereignty* question. Governments worldwide generally resist efforts of outside institutions to alter how they do business. When portions of the government are themselves key players in the events that are causing refugee movements, it is easy for them to appeal to nationalist sentiment by claiming that international relief efforts constitute "external interference" that "violates the sovereignty of the country."

Governmental opposition generally does not totally block relief and protection from ever reaching any internal refugees (and it should also be noted that in many conflict situations, it is the groups opposing the government that are at least as much an obstacle in the areas they control as the government itself). The reality is much more complicated, with important relief work sometimes taking place within the nar-

COMPARISON OF INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE AND INTERNAL REFUGEE POPULATIONS**

Source Country	International Refugees (in asylum countries)	Internal Refugees
Afghanistan	5,927,180*	2,000,000
Angola	395,700	450,000–1,500,000
Bangladesh	48,500	—
Burma	20,600	6,000
Burundi	186,600	—
Cambodia	354,190*	—
Chad	41,300	150,000– 300,000
Chile	5,100	20,000
China (Tibet)	112,000	—
Cyprus	—	265,000
El Salvador	152,500*	150,000– 500,000
Ethiopia	1,101,200*	500,000–1,500,000+
Guatemala	43,280*	120,000– 500,000+
Honduras	—	12,000
India	—	6,000
Iran	348,800*	1,000,000
Iraq	508,200*	500,000–1,000,000+
Laos	78,890	—
Lebanon	—	500,000– 800,000
Mozambique	1,147,000*	1,500,000– 2,000,000
Namibia	81,400	—
Nicaragua	54,760*	200,000– 350,000
Palestinians	2,273,090	—
Peru	—	35,000
Philippines	90,000*	200,000
Rwanda	237,800*	—
Somalia	350,000	600,000
South Africa	24,900	3,570,000+
Sri Lanka	91,500	400,000– 500,000
Sudan	355,000	2,000,000– 3,200,000
Uganda	6,000	100,000– 350,000
USSR	—	156,000
Vietnam	73,920	—
Western Sahara	165,000*	—
Yemen	55,000*	—
Zaire	53,200	—
TOTAL	14,362,610	14,040,000–20,370,000

**Figures vary widely, according to source.*

***The international refugee figures were taken from Table 1, page 32, in this issue of the World Refugee Survey. The international refugee total slightly differs from Table 1, in that some small refugee populations in that Table are not included above. Also, the international refugee figures in this Table also do not include populations considered to be in refugee-like circumstances, such as Haitians, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans in the United States, many of whom are refugees. See Table 2, page 34 for those figures. The internal refugee figures are derived from Table 3, page 34.*

† Includes persons forcibly relocated in government resettlement programs as a result of their race, religion, ethnicity, social group, or imputed political opinion. Sometimes governments seek to explain these relocations as security measures.

row margins of what is possible. Often, it is through the courage and initiative of indigenous nongovernmental organizations that relief reaches portions of the internal refugee population. Thus, while hundreds of thousands of Ugandans died in the early 1980s in the infamous Luwero Triangle region, many who survived owed their lives to the drivers and staff of the Ugandan Red Cross who continued to bring in food convoys despite the murder of many of their numbers.

In other cases, it may be the actions of the media whose documenting of the human suffering brings international public pressure to bear on the government. Sometimes, it is the actions of key officials within the government itself, or of important donor countries, that are responsible for at least some help being provided. Despite the work of many dedicated individuals, such efforts remain ad hoc, slow in starting, and generally woefully inadequate in comparison with the needs.

What Can Be Done To Improve This Situation?

One cannot be optimistic that major improvements will occur quickly. At present, there is not even widespread recognition of the existence of internal refugees, much less an agenda of concrete proposals for better meeting their needs. In addition, as indicated earlier, a considerable amount of thinking and study needs to take place in order to better define the various types of persons who should be considered internal refugees and how these match up with possible ways to meet their needs. Even the term used in this article—*internal refugees*—may turn out, after further study and discussion, not to be the best term to use to describe these people. This is especially true if using it hinders, rather than helps, the ultimate objective of finding ways to better meet their needs—for example, if the term keeps certain institutions from helping because they feel that refugees of any type are outside of their mandate.

However, research and debate on definitional questions should be used as a way to facilitate making concrete changes to better assist and protect these people, whatever term is applied to them, and not to impede this process. In terms of such changes, a number of approaches have been suggested. One would be to alter the relevant legal instruments, such as in humanitarian, human rights, or refugee law. Another would be to expand or strengthen the mandates of existing organizations such as ICRC and UNHCR, as well as others, such as the UN Development Program and UNICEF. Some feel that important improvements may be possible by broadening and improving the kinds of efforts that have already shown some success, without having to make formal changes in the legal instruments or institutional mandates.

Southern Africa is one of the few regions of the world where the governments of the main countries where internal refugees are found (i.e., Mozambique and Angola) generally support rather than hinder international relief efforts to help them. Thus, the call by the Organization for African Unity at the 1988 international conference in Oslo on Southern African Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons for the United Nations Secretary-General to seek new ways to deal with the problems of internally displaced persons in this region may offer an unusual opportunity to make major concrete improvements. Such improvements might also create precedents that could lead to changes in other regions as well.

However, given the politically explosive nature of most internal refugee situations, and the unwillingness of many institutions and governments even to recognize their existence, it will take considerable pressure to bring about any significant changes. Obstacles such as the sovereignty issue will never be eliminated—they will probably only be overcome by building up pressure behind some counterbalancing humanitarian approach. But where will such pressures come from? Who will speak on behalf of these people?

There are a number of possibilities. One might be staff of international humanitarian agencies, who can continue to work for change inside their own institutions. Another might be the media, especially if they can be persuaded to focus on the need for systematic change for a class of people, and not just on each isolated instance. Human rights groups should more actively raise and systematically address the major human rights issues that arise during the creation of internal refugee movements. They should also address what happens to such persons once they have moved.

There is one other group that clearly should be on the list—those individuals and private organizations who see themselves as concerned about the well-being of refugees. The fact that there is no system at all to deal with half or more of the world's refugees, and that people suffer and die as a result, should be of foremost concern to such people and organizations. While United Nations agencies and many government groups see themselves as heavily constrained by formal definitions and mandates, private individuals and agencies have more flexibility. They must refuse to accept the view that the suffering of internal refugees is an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of their failure to fit into our existing systems. Instead, these groups should be in the vanguard of efforts to change those systems or create new ones.

Mary Awatch in her train and the children at the relief site in Abyei are only the most recent victims in a long and tragic history of unnecessary suffering by internal refugees. Much work still needs to be done to determine how best to help them. But let us at least take the first step of acknowledging that these people, whatever terms we use to describe them, do exist, and that the time has come to move them out of the shadows and onto the center stage of humanitarian concern.

FOOTNOTES

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2. *Amnesty International Report 1988*. (Covers the period January to December 1987).
3. "Toll Continues," *Africa News*, November 19, 1988, p. 12.
4. "Sudan, Racked by Famine, Agrees to U.S. Food Airlift," in *The New York Times*, October 13, 1988.
5. Beyer, Gregg. "Improving international response to humanitarian situations," Refugee Policy Group, September 1987, p. 4, quoting UN High Commissioner for Refugees, "Note on International Protection," Thirty-Third Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Program, Geneva: UNHCR, UN Doc. A/AC. 96/609/-Rev. 1.
6. UNHCR figures for refugee populations by country can be found in its annual publication, "UNHCR Activities Financed by Voluntary Funds: Report and Proposed Programmes and Budget," UN Doc. A/AC.96/708.
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Asylum and Refugee Protection in the Bush Years

Arthur C. Helton

More than eight years have passed since the Refugee Act of 1980 became law. Despite ample opportunities, U.S. government authorities have essentially defaulted in implementing key portions of the statute. Sufficient resources have not been devoted to ensuring fair and prompt adjudication. Rather, the government agencies involved have pursued policies that compromise the basic humanitarian purpose of the Act and deny protection to thousands of refugees.

The transition to the Bush Administration provides a new opportunity to secure the humanitarian promise of the Refugee Act. But to achieve this end, there must be more than the mere allocation of additional resources. Fundamental structural changes are needed. Criteria should be clarified and new procedural mechanisms established. More importantly, the quality of refugee status adjudications must be dramatically enhanced.

This article will discuss recent problems in U.S. asylum and refugee policy—of which some are chronic and others are new. Fifteen specific recommendations are offered to improve asylum adjudication and refugee protection.

Central American asylum seekers wait in line outside a Harlingen, Texas, Immigration and Naturalization Service office. The New York Times/W. Watriss

Background: The Refugee Act

To ensure a rational U.S. refugee policy, Congress enacted the Refugee Act of 1980, which established a standard for uniform and non-ideological refugee eligibility. Central to the Act was a definition, derived from international law, of the term *refugee* as a person who has a "well-founded fear of persecution" based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or social standing.

Despite the apparent intent of Congress to establish a uniform refugee standard consistent with the UN refugee *Convention* and *Protocol*, in 1984 the Supreme Court, in *INS v. Stevic*, affirmed the use of a "clear probability" standard for determining eligibility of aliens in the United States for withholding deportation to a place where they would face a threat to life or freedom. The Court, however, declined to rule on the standard to be used in determining eligibility for asylum in the United States.

The Supreme Court answered the question posed in *Stevic* in its March 1987 decision in *INS v. Cardoza-Fonseca*. The Court adopted the more liberal "well-founded fear of persecu-

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tion" standard as the basis for granting asylum intended by the Refugee Act, thereby rejecting the more restrictive standard that had been used previously by the administrative authorities.

The decision in *Cardoza-Fonseca* may yet improve the opportunity to obtain asylum in the United States. But the authorities continue to face a significant implementation responsibility—in the words of Justice Blackman in his concurrence—to put aside "the years of seemingly purposeful blindness by the INS, which only now begins its task of developing the standard entrusted to its care."

Implementation Problems

Ideology continues to dominate asylum and refugee determinations. Protection is frequently granted to those who flee communist regimes, but only relatively rarely to those from authoritarian regimes with which the United States has good relations, irrespective of their human rights records.

The imbalance remains most apparent in the overseas refugee admissions program. Of the 75,754 refugees admitted to the United States in FY 1988, more than 90 percent (69,429) were from communist regimes, principally the Soviet Union and the communist nations of Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia. But even in the politically diverse regions from which smaller numbers of refugees are admitted—the Near East, Latin America, and Africa—the dominant admissions come from Afghanistan, Cuba and Nicaragua, and Ethiopia. In fact, the only noncommunist country worldwide to produce more than a token number of refugee admissions to the United States was Iran, also viewed as a foreign-policy adversary by the U.S. government.

Bias also still confronts many refugees who make their way to the United States and apply for political asylum. Since 1980, about 25 percent of asylum claims have been granted. But in 1988, the immigration authorities granted only 3 percent of the Salvadoran, 4 percent of the Sri Lankan, and 5 percent of the Guatemalan cases. In sharp contrast, 84 percent of the Soviet, 83 percent of the Romanian, 70 percent of the Chinese, 54 percent of the Polish, and 53 percent of the Nicaraguan cases received asylum.

Immigration control continues to encroach upon the asylum area. Haitian asylum seekers are still intercepted by U.S. Coast Guard vessels on the high seas and returned to their home country before they reach shore. More than 18,000 Haitians have been intercepted, and all but four have been returned to uncertain fates in Haiti under the 1982 interdiction agreement between the U.S. and Haitian governments.

The Bush Administration has an important opportunity to enhance asylum and refugee protection in the United States.

Other asylum seekers are imprisoned once they arrive. The largest group in INS detention generally is composed of Salvadorans who, even when able to be considered for release, are generally too indigent to be able to afford posting the large cash bonds necessary to avoid incarceration. But many others are also harmed. As of October 1988, facilities in New York held 41 Afghans, 9 Ghanaians, 27 Haitians, and 15 Sri Lankans. The vast majority of these individuals have applied or will apply for asylum in the United States. In fact, many, such as the 41 Afghans, will ultimately win asylum after six months to a year in detention—the first time under a 1982 detention policy that they can be considered for release despite the fact that they pose no danger to the community, and are able to post bond or offer other assurances that they will not abscond.

In 1988, there were 60,736 asylum claims filed with INS. But asylum adjudication continues to have a relatively low priority in INS. The agency has invested only minimal resources into the development of the adjudication process. Despite the large numbers of claims filed over the past eight years, more than 250,000 with INS District Directors, there are presently only about 30 INS officers who have been designated to process asylum claims, and many of them spend significant amounts of time in the adjudication of conventional immigration cases. Also, INS has held only a handful of in-service programs for some of its adjudicators, and INS training materials are outdated and inaccurate. Asylum has been discussed only incidentally at the annual conferences held for immigration judges.

Perhaps the best evidence of a lack of commitment by INS to improve asylum adjudication is the failure to issue final rules to replace the interim regulations originally issued in 1980. After several years of consideration, comprehensive asylum rules were proposed in the *Federal Register* on August 28, 1987. Under the August 28 version, the immigration judges of the Justice Department were no longer to have jurisdiction over asylum requests. Instead, these functions were to be performed exclusively by centrally administered and specially trained Asylum Officers—INS employees, who were to render decisions in "non-adversarial proceedings." The plan to oust immigration judges from asylum adjudications, however, engendered considerable controversy. As a consequence, the Department of Justice announced in December 1987 its intention to modify the rules to provide for continued decisions by immigration judges in exclusion or deportation proceedings. The modified proposal was then re-published for comment by May 6, 1988. No final rules have yet been issued.

The delay in the issuance of final regulations, however, has nothing to do with the public comments received. Rather, in a fit of bureaucratic schizophrenia, the INS itself now opposes the proposal. The Service's principal objections concern the establishment of the Asylum Officer Corps, as the agency would prefer to retain the use of general immigration examiners under the supervision of local District Directors; the continued use of relatively low-threshold standards for granting employment authorization to asylum applicants, which the agency would like to restrict in view of the increased filings this year; and the role of the Department of Justice in training adjudicators and reviewing adverse decisions, which the Service would like to eliminate.

The overseas refugee admissions process suffers from similar neglect. Only about 60 officers abroad deal with refugee matters, and no more than 30 or so adjudicate refugee cases on anything approaching a full-time basis. Adjudica-

tor training and instruction are rudimentary, the principal resource being *Worldwide Guidelines for Overseas Refugee Processing* issued in 1983—*Guidelines* that have never been applied outside Southeast Asia and have never been updated to reflect developments such as the Supreme Court's 1987 decision in *Cardoza-Fonseca* on the refugee standard. The *Guidelines* themselves omit from coverage important subjects, such as how to assess a refugee applicant's credibility, and by what criteria to determine whether a refugee is unworthy of protection by virtue of having persecuted others. Nor has there been any formal training or instruction for refugee adjudicators.

Perhaps the greatest frustrations to applicants and their advocates in the overseas process are caused by lack of procedural safeguards. Refugee applicants are not given any reason for denial of admission, and they have no effective way to appeal or review denials.

The overseas admissions process has also been characterized from its inception by uneven adjudication, including the use of overly restrictive criteria. A notorious example is the denial of at least 10,000 Cambodian claimants at Khao I Dang camp in Thailand on the ground that they had allegedly persecuted others. There is much controversy over whether these cases were wrongly decided and whether a further review is warranted.

A U.S. Border Patrol officer comforts a Central American asylum seeker who had been separated from her child. The Washington Post/F. Johnston

Recommendations for Improvement in Asylum Adjudication and Refugee Protection

1. In terms of refugee doctrine, the United States departs from international standards in one important respect—the imposition of an overly restrictive standard of proof on refugees who seek to avoid return (refoulement) to a territory where they may face persecution. The United States requires proof of a *probability* of persecution, while international law requires but proof of a *well-founded fear* of persecution. This divergence should be addressed by amending domestic law (section 243(h) of the Immigration and Nationality Act) to substitute the term *refugee* for *alien*, thereby incorporating the international standard into the domestic withholding of deportation provision.

2. Since 1980, the United States has operated under interim regulations that provide insufficient safeguards against improper political influence and arbitrary decision-making in asylum and refugee admissions determinations. Criteria for refugee recognition should be set forth fully in regulations in order to guide adjudicators and provide notice to asylum and refugee applicants and their counsel. Guidelines and instructions for adjudicators should be comprehensive, continuously updated, and readily available to the public.

3. Rules should also be issued to strengthen confidentiality for asylum claims (particularly in deportation proceedings); use international standards to determine refugee status (including authorization to work while a claim is pending, where the claim is not "clearly abusive" or "manifestly unfounded," including during any administrative appeal or judicial review); use liberal protection criteria for those who have suffered persecution in the past and who have left countries in violation of an exit visa requirement; use a narrower definition of when a refugee should be denied protection because he or she has "resettled" elsewhere; and establish a procedure requiring that crewmen and stowaways be removed from their "conveyances" in order to have their claims determined. These are elements of rules proposed for public comment in April 1988, but not yet issued. Such rules should also make clear that a proper exercise of discretion requires a balancing of all relevant factors in the individual case and that there are no mandatory grounds for denial of asylum.

4. Some of the most serious problems in U.S. asylum and refugee protection concern implementation. For example, the State Department should discontinue its practice of providing opinions on the ultimate question to be decided in individual asylum cases—whether the refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution. Such conclusory pronouncements simply serve to continue the ideological bias which the Refugee Act of 1980 was designed to eliminate. Should the Department wish to make informa-

tion on general country conditions available to the adjudicator, then that information should be revealed as well to the refugee and his or her counsel. Only through such disclosure can proper weight be given to the position of the State Department.

5. Asylum adjudicators should be centrally administered, high-level professionals capable of independent assessment and judgment on fact-sensitive cases which involve complex background conditions in the country of origin. Adjudicators, now INS functionaries, should be recruited generally from outside of INS, in order to avoid the cynicism and insensitivity that may attend long service in a law enforcement function, and the consequent application of overly restrictive criteria. They also should be instructed in the law and history of human rights and refugees. In addition to initial instruction, asylum adjudicators should be exposed to different perspectives through creative in-service training programs. This ongoing training should involve groups such as the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the international organization charged with supervising the compliance of state parties to the UN *Convention* and *Protocol* on refugees, as well as others knowledgeable about the rights of refugees.

6. Traditionally, immigration judges have come from the ranks of INS. Judges inculcated with the law-enforcement ethos of INS seem sometimes incapable of giving a refugee the benefit of the doubt in the presentation of an asylum claim. The members of immigration tribunals which hear asylum cases, including on appeal, should be organized into separate sub-groups or tribunal "parts" devoted to hearing asylum cases, and those members should be recruited generally from outside INS.

7. The quality of the processing of refugee claims from abroad must also be improved. Recruitment, training, and in-service instruction should be the same for refugee admissions adjudicators as for asylum adjudicators. Also, the procedures by which such claims are examined must be improved in order to accord with notions of basic due process of law. Adverse decisions should be in writing and give reasons for the denial of refugee status so that an applicant can seek meaningful reconsideration or appeal. There should be a right to an administrative appeal from an adverse decision, and a right to judicial review under appropriate circumstances. Cases decided previously under faulty criteria or procedures should be reviewed by the authorities as a matter of course. Only with such changes can the processing of refugee cases abroad be made fair and humane.

8. More fundamentally, after eight years of flawed implementation, the function of asylum and refugee adjudication should be removed from INS. The enforcement function of the agency is incompatible with a sensitive examination of refugee claims. The protection function should be lodged in a separate agency, even a new office within the Department of Justice.

9. The opportunity should be maintained for a full due process hearing for asylum applicants who are initially denied recognition as refugees. The recent consensus on continuing the role of immigration judges in asylum adjudication recognizes the grave interests at risk for the individual—life or liberty. The need for procedural due process is paramount under these circumstances.

10. Given the high stakes to the individual, indigent asylum applicants should be entitled to the assistance of free legal counsel, particularly in the immigration courts. While the federal courts have declined to require the appointment of counsel generally in immigration cases, Congress could make provision for counsel by statute in asylum cases. Nor would the logistics be overwhelming. Recent information indicates that only about 1,000 asylum cases are filed per month in the immigration courts. Refugee status applicants abroad also should have meaningful access to counseling and advocacy with respect to the U.S. admissions program. Protection for refugees should not depend on the wealth of the claimant or the happenstance of the availability of *pro bono* or public interest advocacy.

11. One structural safeguard in the review of refugee determinations would be the formal involvement of UNHCR in the process. UNHCR has a much more signifcant role in the determination of refugee status in many countries apart from the United States. A suitable role for UNHCR in the United States would assist in rationalizing adjudications.

12. Alien interdiction and categorical detention programs, while generally intended to deter undocumented migration, specifically violate the rights of refugees. The focus of reform should not be on deterrence, which either encourages refugees to return to or stay in their home countries and run the risk of persecution, or to have them go elsewhere and shift the burden to other countries of asylum. Rather, the focus should be on establishing a fair asylum adjudication system. Resources should be committed at a sufficient level to ensure that adjudications are expeditious, without compromising basic due process. The United States should end its use of deterrent measures like interdiction or abusive detention, and should condemn such practices when employed by other governments.

13. Specifically, detention of asylum seekers should not be automatic, and should be imposed only when necessary to protect the community at large or to avoid absconding. Generally, minors should not be detained.

14. The mandate of the United States Coordinator for Refugee Affairs should include asylum in the context of developing "overall United States refugee admission and resettlement policy. . . ."

15. A formal safe haven policy should be established for those individuals in the United States who would not be protected by even a generous interpretation of the *refugee* definition, but who nonetheless should not be forced to return immediately to their home countries (e.g., victims of natural disasters, innocent civilians caught in the crossfire of a civil war, etc.). The first groups to be considered for temporary protection under the policy should be those who have fled civil strife in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Also, the establishment of a new immigration admissions program should be considered for groups not covered by the refugee definition, but whom the United States might consider to be of special concern and wish, therefore, to admit from abroad.

* * *

The Bush Administration has an important opportunity to enhance asylum and refugee protection in the United States. Basic reform is needed to secure compassion and fairness in asylum adjudications and refugee admissions. Moreover, the lives and freedom of thousands of refugees depend on whether this opportunity is taken by the new Administration.

The New Battleground of Asylum Eligibility

Deborah Anker and Kate Tweedy McGrath

Almost two years have passed since the U.S. Supreme Court issued its landmark decision in *Cardoza-Fonseca*, holding that a more liberal "well-founded fear" standard of proof was to be used in determining an applicant's eligibility for receiving asylum in the United States.

In the aftermath of *Cardoza-Fonseca*, however, decisions of the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals ("BIA" or "Board"), the highest administrative appeals body in asylum cases, have shifted away from questions of the burden of proof to the meaning of persecution and political opinion under the refugee definition. In a number of recent decisions, it has chosen to take a narrowing interpretation of the word *persecution*—one that renders it more difficult to establish an asylum claim, especially when the applicant is from a country engulfed in civil war. Many recent asylum seekers in the United States are nationals of El Salvador whose claims are engendered by the civil war in that country, and its accompanying human rights violations and violence against neutral individuals, as well as against active participants on either side. Thus, the critical question in asylum cases now has become under what circumstances an applicant's proven fear of harm constitutes persecution "on account of political opinion" in a civil war setting. For the time being, the answer from the Board has been, "Rarely, if ever."

Political Neutrality as Political Opinion

To meet the definition of a refugee, an asylum seeker in the United States must show that he or she has a well-founded fear of persecution based on one of five specific grounds: race, religion, nationality, membership in a social group, or political opinion.[1] Under that standard, the asylum seeker has to show that the fear of persecution is subjectively genuine and has some objective basis, amounting to a reasonable possibility of harm.[2]

. . . any persecutor, particularly in the context of civil war, will be able to allege some motive to curb violence or terrorism.

The Board's new decisions have arisen primarily in cases where the applicant has shown a reasonable fear of harm, and alleges that the persecution is based on a political opinion of neutrality. The applicant's decision to remain neutral occurs in the context of widespread civil war, where both the government and insurgent forces seek to recruit an individual, often by force. In addition, when he or she refuses to join or is dragooned and then deserts, the contending forces assume that the asylum applicant shares the views of the opposition.

Political Opinion in the Eyes of the Persecutor

A notable example of the Board's view of political opinion is its treatment of an applicant's claims of persecution based on forcible recruitment by the Salvadoran guerrillas. In *Matter of Maldonado-Cruz*, a young Salvadoran farmer sought asylum in the United States after guerrillas had forcibly kidnapped him from his fields. The same day, the guerrillas also seized his friend, who later escaped. Subsequently, the guerrillas took Maldonado-Cruz on a raid on his home village during which they captured and killed his friend. Maldonado-Cruz escaped that night and fled the country the next day. He argued that he was not only in danger from the guerrillas, but also feared that he would be killed by the government because of his prior, albeit involuntary, association with the guerrillas.

The BIA found that Maldonado-Cruz's fear, well-founded or not, did not arise from a political opinion that he either had or that his potential persecutors thought he had. In examining Maldonado-Cruz's kidnapping and fear of retribution for escaping, the Board ruled that in both cases the guerrillas were indifferent to any political opinion Maldonado-Cruz might have; "they wanted him to be a member of their group even if his help was not provided willingly."[3] The Board held that the guerrillas merely sought to maintain their forces by disciplining deserters, and that the guerrillas "must impose discipline," an important tool of which is the "punishment of deserters."[4]

Significantly, the Board's position stands in marked contrast with that of the two federal circuit courts of appeal that have addressed this issue. In a pre-*Cardoza-Fonseca* case, for example, *Bolanos-Hernandez v. INS*,[5] the Ninth Circuit held that political neutrality—the refusal to join either side in the civil war in El Salvador—constituted a "political opinion," at least where that choice of neutrality was deliberate and resulted in specific threats directed at the applicant. To hold otherwise, the court noted, would violate the principle of ideological neutrality—a critical concern of Congress in adopting the United Nations *Convention*'s refugee definition

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into the Refugee Act of 1980.[6] Rejecting a claim of political neutrality would have the effect of only granting protection to those who take sides and of penalizing moderates. The court also held that the existence of widespread violence supported, rather than detracted from, the reasonableness of the applicant's fear.

Following the same line of reasoning in a post-*Cardoza-Fonseca* case, the Fourth Circuit, in *M.A. v. INS*, held that an applicant's desertion from the armed forces constitutes protected political opinion when his desertion is based on refusal to participate in torture and other human rights abuses against civilians, abuses that are attested to by recognized nongovernmental human rights organizations.[7]

The Board had held that M.A.'s claim regarding human rights violations by the military was not cognizable unless those violations were condemned by the United Nations. The Fourth Circuit, in contrast, held that M.A. did not have to wait for UN condemnation, and noted that the atrocities alleged violated the minimum standards of wartime conduct established by the Geneva *Conventions* of 1949. The court also found that the Board's novel requirement that only UN condemnation would be recognized placed an unduly harsh burden on the applicant that contradicted the Supreme Court's liberalization of the burden of proof in *Cardoza-Fonseca*.[8]

The major principle that can be derived from the Board's decisions in *Maldonado-Cruz* and *M.A.*, and indeed its other major decisions in 1988, is that combatants are not refugees. According to the Board, "violence appears inherent to revolutionary struggles. . . . Virtually all participants on either side of an armed struggle could be characterized as 'persecutors'," and thus ineligible for asylum status.[9]

Disparate Standards

The Fourth Circuit in *M.A.* noted that the Board's position that combatants in a civil war are not refugees has not been applied consistently to applicants from different countries. The court noted that in the contexts of other governments and other wars the Board has recognized claims by combatants based on their refusal to serve. The court cited *Matter of Salim* as a case in which the Board determined that an applicant had a well-founded fear of persecution for his opposition activities and for his refusal to serve in the "Soviet-controlled Afghan Army."

In contrast, in *Maldonado-Cruz*, the Board found that the actions of the government and the guerrillas were "neutral," in that they were unrelated to any motivation to "persecute" on the basis of the applicant's political opinion. The Board made no explicit judgment of the propriety of either side's actions from a human rights perspective. Yet in *Salim* and other cases, the Board has made those judgments with regard to the Soviet-backed regime in Afghanistan, and the Ayatollah Khomeini's regime in Iran.[10] The court in *M.A.* noted that a major purpose of the Refugee Act of 1980 was to eradicate geographically disparate treatment of asylum applicants.[11]

Thus, in the Iranian and Afghan cases, the Board has made exactly the political judgments regarding the legitimacy of the government in power and of opposition forces that the Board seeks to avoid (and in effect has held irrelevant) in Salvadoran and other cases. These contrasting results are further examples of long-standing problems concerning disparate standards in adjudicating asylum claims for which U.S. asylum policy has been criticized. Significantly, the Board's position in the Salvadoran cases that combatants are not refugees also contrasts with the policies and statements of other agencies and officials in the Justice Department and INS who have indicated that many of the contras engaged in the civil war in Nicaragua have a "pretty well-founded fear of persecution."[12]

Christopher Bing

Prosecution Rather Than Persecution

The Board also has characterized claims of prospective detention, torture, and death as fear of legitimate criminal prosecution, instead of fear of persecution, in a number of Salvadoran and Guatemalan cases. In the Board's view, granting asylum to persons who allege fear of persecution by a government that is defending itself against a civil war deprives that government of its legitimate right to defend itself against insurrection. Or, as one member of the Board has said, "If the Government of El Salvador has the right to seek out persons who are guerrillas or who support the guerrillas, then doing so is no act of persecution."[13]

For example, in *Matter of Manuel Ayala-Martinez*, the Board found that a

Salvadoran Green Cross worker did not qualify for asylum because the government had a legitimate right to investigate him for suspected criminal activity.[14] The "criminal activity" in this case involved the policy of the Green Cross to extend health care to wounded guerrillas and not to turn them over to the government. The Board held that the security forces' interest in the Green Cross worker constituted an appropriate and legitimate investigation of potential criminal activity.

The Board's characterization of the security forces' and the government's actions in these cases as "prosecution, not persecution" has placed it in direct conflict with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. It held in *Hernandez-Ortiz v. INS* that it is reasonable to presume a political motivation where a government acts against an individual or a group without evidence that the individual or group has engaged in any criminal activity or other conduct that could provide a legitimate basis for the government action.[15]

Ironically, the Board has turned this proposition on its head and cited it for its opposite—that is, where a government acts against a group or individual, and the government alleges or appears to have a nonpolitical criminal investigatory motive, the government's interests or action will never constitute *persecution* on account of political opinion, but rather *prosecution* for suspected criminal activity. Significantly, most of these cases do not involve simple fear of criminal allegations or even lengthy detention for investigatory purposes. Instead, the applicants allege threats of torture, other gross physical abuse, and death. However, in its use of the *prosecution/persecution* dichotomy, the Board fails to address these aspects of the applicant's claim.

Although the Board appears to have retreated from its earlier position that an asylum claimant must prove his or her persecutor's subjective motives, it is clear that any persecutor, particularly in the context of civil war, will be able to allege some motive to curb violence or terrorism. Thus, the shield of governmental authority may legitimize persecution: few asylum applicants will be able to produce a "note from their dictator" confessing to persecutory motives and disavowing any legitimate *prosecutorial* basis for their actions.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals recently has established some guidance in this area. The court, in *Blanco-Lopez v. INS*, found a Salvadoran fisherman eligible for asylum, reversing the Board's ruling that the government had only legitimately prosecuted him for allegedly running guns from Nicaragua.[16]

The evidence showed that Blanco-Lopez had been falsely accused by a rival fisherman with connections to the security forces. As a result, the government had arrested him, held him incommunicado, and beaten him for three days, under constant threat of death unless he confessed to being a subversive. Released only through the intercession of a brother in the army, he was again denounced by the same rival. Knowing his brother would not protect him a second time, he immediately fled the country. Within hours, the security forces had surrounded his house, demanding his whereabouts and threatening to kill him.

In this case as in the others, the Board did not address the threats of death, asserting that the government was merely investigating alleged criminal activity. But the Ninth Circuit disagreed, finding that the police's actions bore none of the earmarks of a legitimate criminal investigation. Significantly, the court stopped short of recognizing as persecution criminal investigations with political overtones conducted without the due process of law that the United States considers appropriate.

One of the most extreme results reached by the Board through its *persecution/prosecution* analysis is its holding in *Matter of Dwomoh*.[17] In that case, a Ghanaian army sergeant participated in an abortive coup against the military government. As a result, he was arrested, beaten, and imprisoned for a year, after which he fled Ghana. Although conceding that Dwomoh's actions were motivated by his political beliefs, the Board chose to focus on those actions *per se*, rather than as an expression of his political opinion. The Board held, "[H]e is not facing prosecution for his political views, but rather for the . . . act of trying to overthrow the government of Ghana." Like the United States, the Board argued, the government of Ghana had a right to enforce its laws against treason and insurrection. A federal district court overruled the Board, finding that the imprisonment without formal charges and opportunity for a full trial and appeal rendered not pertinent the Board's analogy to the United States. The court held that "in certain countries individuals who express opposition to the government are jailed, and in certain countries, an attempted coup is the only way to change the government."

Prosecution versus persecution may prove to be one of those deceptively facile and abstract legal concepts that is ultimately unhelpful as a vehicle for examining the reality of political oppression, violence, and counterviolence raised by contemporary refugee claims. In a sense, all of the major post-*Cardoza-Fonseca* cases deal with the *prosecution versus persecution* issue; they all raise the question—the critical question never directly addressed by the Board—of when a government or opposition force itself is *legitimate* and what principles or standards should be used to make that judgment. At least one Board member has argued that the Board in these cases must confront the question of whether the government in power is "democratic," whether the political system and reality allow for peaceful, nonviolent change.[18] The Board's unspoken judgment regarding this question may explain the disparate results in Afghan and Iranian as opposed to Salvadoran and Guatemalan cases. These judgments might best be made explicitly so that relevant evidence can be assessed, and the decisions subjected to public scrutiny and judicial review.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Immigration and Nationality Act*, Section 101(a) (42)(A), 8 U.S.C. 1101(a) (42)(A).
2. See, e.g., *Rodriguez-Rivera v. INS*, 848 F.2d 998 (9th Cir. 1988); *Blanco-Comarribas v. INS*, 830 F.2d 1039 (9th Cir. 1987).
3. *Matter of Maldonado-Cruz*, Interim Decision 3041 (BIA 1988) p. 7.
4. *Id.* at p. 10.
5. 767 F.2d 1277, 1286 (9th Cir. 1985).
6. *Ibid.*
7. *M.A. v. INS*, 858 F.2d 210 (4th Cir. 1988).
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Matter of Fuentes-Sanchez*, Int.Dec. 3065 (BIA 1988). See also *Maldonado-Cruz; Rodriguez-Majano; A.G.; Canas-Segovia.*
10. *Matter of Salim*, 18 I&N Dec. 311 (BIA 1982). *Matter of Mohibi*, A27–497–579 (BIA 7/27/87). See also *Matter of Mogharrabi*, Interim Decision 3028 (BIA 1987).
11. *M.A. v. INS*, *op cit*, fn. 8.
12. *New York Times*, 12/14/88, p. 1.
13. *Matter of Ramirez-Rivas*, #A24–868–155, San Francisco, unpublished opinion, (BIA 9/20/88); concurring opinion, p. 2.
14. *Matter of Manuel Avala-Martinez*, #A24–348–629, Phoenix (BIA 8/2/88).
15. *Hernandez-Ortiz v. INS*, 777 F.2d 509, 516–17 (9th Cir. 1985).
16. *Blanco-Lopez v. INS*, 858 F.2d 531 (9th Cir. 1988). See also, *In re Doherty*, #A26–185–231, unpublished opinion (BIA 11/14/88), concurring opinion by Michael J. Heilman, pp. 1–2.
17. *Matter of Dwomoh*, A26805882 (BIA 1982) unpublished, cited in *Dwomoh v. Sava*, 7th District NY, 88 Civ. 60 83, 10/14/88.
18. *In re Doherty*, op.cit.

1988 World Refugee Statistics

Published documents and other sources often vary in the numbers of refugees reported in a particular situation. Such variation can be disconcerting and may bring into question the sources' credibility. One obvious reason for discrepancies is the fluidity of refugee situations—a country quiet in February may be overwhelmed by June, and equally correct reports might be available for both periods. Counts obtained in relatively stable or contained situations may be more reliable than those from large or rapidly changing ones; statistics about populations in camps from which refugees are processed for resettlement, as in Southeast Asia, for example, appear regularly and are quite reliable. But even here, updated or revised censuses or estimates can lead to some discrepancies.

Media reports—although providing prompt, continuing information—may be inconsistent about whom they term a refugee or may not cite sources.

Most subtle differences in refugee counts arise because those collecting data—while most often drawing on figures provided by the governments of asylum countries—do so according to definitions and criteria that may differ significantly. For example, numbers provided by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees include all refugees (of whom UNHCR assists some) reported by asylum-country governments, while reports such as those of the U.S. State Department classify refugees as "requiring protection and assistance" or "refugees resettled and persons granted asylum."

Politics and nations' administrative procedures affect counts of refugees. Some sources, for example, report certain aliens in a country as meriting international recognition as refugees, while others term them illegal migrant workers seeking economic opportunity. It may be in the political interest of a government to understate its refugee population or, in other instances, to report inflated numbers. Because countries may admit individuals under classifications other than refugee, some who might fit this description by virtue of their circumstances may not be counted as such; in countries of resettlement, these might include family reunification and special humanitarian admissions. Asylum seekers whose applications have been denied but who nevertheless are permitted to stay in a country may also not be reflected in refugee counts.

Some clarity in reporting is feasible: for example, agencies can report with some confidence the numbers for whom aid is provided or planned. Ideally, assistance and protection would be provided to all those who require it, and thus, counts of actual recipients of aid or "registered" refugees would represent all who are in need. In reality, of course, this is not always the case. Also, international assistance is sometimes provided to individuals who do not meet the international refugee definition per se, but who are deemed to be "in refugee-like situations"; these may appear in refugee counts. In Africa, for example, UNHCR operates in accordance with the mandate of the Organization of African Unity, whose refugee definition is broader than that of the UN's own convention and protocol, and its count of refugees of concern there is of broader scope than its count for Central America.

In some instances, accuracy may be detrimental, even dangerous. Figures following rigid definitions may jeopardize agencies' ability to provide adequate services to those quite obviously in need. Also, individuals may rightfully fear to draw attention to themselves, even in countries of asylum, for fear of retribution.

Suggestions for numerous refinements in the types of statistics available have been made to USCR—how many refugees are women and children, how many are aged, how many have some level of education, how many require immediate "emergency" assistance, and how many need to be maintained and cared for beyond initial assistance. Such detail is not generally retrievable from existing reports.

In view of the many deficiencies in the available data, questions may arise about the usefulness of collecting and reporting refugee statistics at all.

When used carefully and with a good understanding of their flaws, statistics provide one means to grasp the magnitude of "the refugee problem." Credible, clear, comparable data disallow flagrant exaggeration as well as understatement. For assistance to be provided and programs to be planned, reasonably reliable numbers are vital; data also allow one measure of success of efforts on behalf of refugees. Numbers are useful, too, to establish clearly that the burden of caring for refugees is shared, and that nowadays it is often the least well-off nations which support refugee populations.

In collecting data for the statistics and country reports, we rely largely on other sources whom we judge to be responsible. Instances where key sources differ significantly (for reasons we could identify as other than time period of reports) are indicated in the statistical tables with an asterisk(*). We have used the most current figures available. All numbers have been rounded, and we stress that none should be interpreted as absolute. For further detail or clarification of numbers in the tables, see the country reports.

TABLE 1

REFUGEES IN NEED OF PROTECTION AND/OR ASSISTANCE

Refugees who require international protection and/or assistance may be new populations, or they may have been in a country for some years. Their most important characteristics are their inability to repatriate due to continued fear of persecution in their homelands and the absence of permanent settlement opportunities in their countries of asylum or elsewhere. In some cases, they may no longer require assistance, but still need international protection. For others, the situation is the reverse.

Asylum Country	Subtotal by Source Country	Total
AFRICA		
Algeria		167,000*
W. Sahara	165,000*	
Others	2,000	
Angola		95,700
Namibia	74,000	
Zaire	12,300	
S. Africa	9,400	
Benin		3,000
Chad	3,000	
Botswana		2,700
Zimbabwe	1,300	
S. Africa	900	
Others	500	
Burkina Faso		200
Chad	200	
Burundi		76,000*
Rwanda	65,800*	
Zaire	9,600	
Uganda	400	
Others	200	
Cameroon		4,700
Chad	4,400	
Namibia	100	
Others	200	
Central African Rep.		3,000
Chad	2,900	
Others	100	
Congo		2,100
Chad	1,500	
Zaire	300	
Others	300	
Djibouti		2,000
Ethiopia	2,000	
Egypt		5,600
Palestinians	4,500	
Others	1,160	
Ethiopia		700,500*
Somalia	350,000*	
Sudan	350,000	
Others	300	
Gabon		100
Various	100	

Ghana		**100**
Various	100	
Ivory Coast		**800**
Indochina	300	
Chad	100	
Ghana	100	
Others	300	
Kenya		**10,600**
Uganda	5,600	
Ethiopia	2,200	
Rwanda	2,000	
Others	800	
Lesotho		**4,000***
S. Africa	4,000*	
Liberia		**200**
Various	200	
Malawi		**630,000**
Mozambique	630,000	
Morocco		**800**
Various	800	
Mozambique		**400**
S. Africa	200	
Chile	100	
Others	100	
Nigeria		**5,000**
Chad	4,200	
Others	800	
Rwanda		**20,600***
Burundi	20,600*	
Senegal		**5,200**
Guinea Bissau	5,000	
Others	200	
Sierra Leone		**100**
Various	100	
Somalia		**365,000***
Ethiopia	365,000*	
South Africa		**180,000***
Mozambique	180,000*	
Sudan		**693,600***
Ethiopia	660,000*	
Chad	25,000	
Zaire	5,000	
Uganda	3,600	
Swaziland		**70,700***
Mozambique	64,000*	
S. Africa	6,700	
Tanzania		**266,200**
Burundi	156,000	
Mozambique	72,000	
Rwanda	21,000	
Zaire	16,000	
Others	1,200	
Togo		**500**
Ghana	400	
Others	100	
Tunisia		**100**
Various	100	
Uganda		**125,500***
Rwanda	118,000*	
Sudan	5,000	
Zaire	1,000	
Others	1,500	
Zaire		**325,700**
Angola	298,700	
Rwanda	11,000	
Burundi	10,000	
Other	6,000	
Zambia		**149,000**
Angola	97,000	
Mozambique	30,000	
Zaire	9,000	
Namibia	7,300	
S. Africa	3,200	
Others	2,500	
Zimbabwe		**171,500***
Mozambique	171,000*	
S. Africa	500	

TOTAL AFRICA 4,088,280

EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Hong Kong		**25,260**
Vietnam	25,260	
Indonesia		**2,310**
Vietnam	2,310	
Japan		**520**
Vietnam	520	
Korea		**120**
Vietnam	120	
Macau		**440**
Vietnam	440	
Malaysia		**102,890**
Philippines	90,000	
Vietnam	12,880	
Papua New Guinea		**8,000**
Irian Jaya	8,000	
Philippines		**20,920**
(First Asylum)		
Vietnam	4,300	
(Refugee Processing Center)		
Vietnam	14,100	
Laos	1,830	
Cambodia	690	
Singapore		**290**
Vietnam	290	
Taiwan		**180**
Indochina	180	
Thailand		**439,860**
(First Asylum)		
Laos	71,900	
Burma	20,600	
Cambodia	16,920	
Vietnam	9,300	
(Refugee Processing Center)		
Laos	5,160	
Cambodia	580	
(Border Camps)		
Cambodia	311,000	
Vietnam	4,400	
Vietnam		**25,000**
Cambodia	25,000	

TOTAL EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC 625,780

EUROPE

Austria		**15,700**
Hungary	5,000	
Poland	3,900	
Czechoslovakia	2,700	
Romania	2,200	
Various	1,900	
Greece		**4,600**
Various	4,600	
Hungary		**10,000**
Romania	10,000	
Italy		**13,000**
Various	13,000	
Portugal		**900**
Various	900	
Spain		**9,200**
Various	9,200	
Turkey		**301,200***
Iran	250,000*	
Iraq	51,200	
Yugoslavia		**1,400**
Various	1,400	

TOTAL EUROPE 356,000

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Argentina		**4,900**
Chile	4,300	
S.E. Asia	400	
Europe	100	
Other	100	
Belize		**4,100**
El Salvador	2,900	
Guatemala	1,200	
Bolivia		**300**
Chile	200	
Guatemala	100	
Brazil		**250**
Europe	100	
Others	150	
Chile		**450**
Europe	450	
Colombia		**410**
Europe	200	
Central America	110	
Chile	100	
Costa Rica		**38,700**
Nicaragua	29,700	
El Salvador	6,200	
Cuba	2,500	
Others	300	
Cuba		**2,000**
Haiti	2,000	
Dominican Republic		**6,000***
Haiti	6,000*	
Ecuador		**700**
Chile	400	
Cuba	100	
Iran	100	
Others	100	
El Salvador		**400**
Nicaragua	400	
French Guiana		**8,000**
Suriname	8,000	
Guatemala		**2,100**
Nicaragua	1,600	
El Salvador	500	
Honduras		**38,540**
Nicaragua	23,060	
El Salvador	15,100	
Guatemala	380	
Mexico		**162,600***
Guatemala	41,200	
El Salvador	120,000*	
Others	1,400	
Nicaragua		**7,600**
El Salvador	7,200	
Guatemala	400	
Panama		**1,400**
El Salvador	600	
Others	800	
Peru		**700**
Various	700	
Uruguay		**200**
Various	200	
Venezuela		**500**
Caribbean	500	

TOTAL LATIN AMERICA/ CARIBBEAN 279,850

MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Gaza Strip		**459,070**
Palestinians	459,070	
India		**246,820***
China (Tibet)	100,000*	
Sri Lanka	91,500	
Bangladesh	48,500	
Afghanistan	5,180	
Iran	1,440	
Burma	200	
Iran		**2,807,000***
Afghanistan	2,350,000	
Iraq	457,000*	
Iraq		**75,000***
Iran	75,000*	
Jordan		**870,490**
Palestinians	870,490	
Lebanon		**294,080**
Palestinians	288,180	
Others	5,900	
Nepal		**12,000**
China (Tibet)	12,000	
Pakistan		**3,594,680**
Afghanistan	3,572,000	
Iran	22,360	
Others	240	
Syria		**265,220**
Palestinians	265,220	
West Bank		**385,630**
Palestinians	385,630	
Yemen Arab Republic		**62,000***
PDR of Yemen	55,000*	
Ethiopia	7,000*	

TOTAL MIDDLE EAST/ SOUTH ASIA 9,071,910

GRAND TOTAL 14,421,800

*Indicates that sources vary significantly in number reported.

TABLE 2
SELECTED POPULATIONS IN REFUGEE-LIKE CIRCUMSTANCES

Great numbers of people who may fear persecution if returned to their home countries—and thus, may, in fact, be refugees—are undocumented, unregistered, have yet to have their asylum claims decided, or for some other reason fall outside the legal protection mechanisms of host countries and international agencies. Information on these groups is fragmentary and estimates of their numbers often vary widely, especially those numbers marked by an asterisk.(*)

Population	Number	Location
Palestinians	**524,000***	
outside UNRWA's area of	350,000	Kuwait
operations (partial listing of	70,000	Saudi Arabia
countries)	60,000	Egypt
	24,000	Libya
	20,000	Iraq
Recent Asylum Applicants	**360,000**	
pending refugee status	103,000	W. Germany
determination in Western	85,000	Canada
Europe and North America	77,000	U.S.A.
(partial listing of countries)	32,000	France
	19,000	Sweden
	17,000	Switzerland
	14,000	Netherlands
	8,000	U.K.
Central Americans	**1,030,000–1,993,000***	
many do not apply for	770,000–1,500,000*	U.S.A.
asylum due to inadequate	100,000–250,000*	Costa Rica
refugee determination	50,000–200,000	Honduras
procedures or low asylum	25,000–40,000	Belize
approval rates		
Haitians	**820,000–1,085,000***	
governments look upon	450,000*	U.S.A.
solely as economic migrants,	250,000–500,000	Dom. Rep.
and rarely accord them	45,000*	Canada
refugee status (partial listing	30,000	Bahamas
of countries)	30,000	Caribbean
	15,000–30,000	France

TABLE 3
INTERNALLY DISPLACED

The following table identifies selected countries in which substantial numbers of persons have been displaced internally within their homelands as a result of human conflict. Although they share many characteristics with refugees who cross international borders, they are generally not eligible for international refugee assistance. No agency has the capacity or responsibility for keeping track of all displaced people. Therefore, information is generally less specific than for refugees, and this table presents only reported estimates or ranges. Because the figures are not comprehensive, no total is provided.

Angola	450,000–1,500,000
Chad	150,000–300,000
Ethiopia	700,000–1,500,000+
Mozambique	1,500,000–2,000,000
Somalia	600,000
South Africa	3,570,000+
Sudan	2,000,000–3,200,000
Uganda	100,000–350,000
Chile	20,000
El Salvador	150 000–500,000
Guatemala	120,000–500,000+
Honduras	12,000
Nicaragua	200,000–350,000
Peru	35,000
Afghanistan	2,000,000
Burma	6,000
Cyprus	265,000
India	6,000
Iran	1,000,000
Iraq	500,000–1,000,000+
Lebanon	500,000–800,000
Philippines	200,000
Sri Lanka	400,000–500,000
USSR	156,000

+ Includes persons forcibly relocated in government resettlement programs as a result of their race, religion, ethnicity, social group, or imputed political opinion. Sometimes governments seek to explain these relocations as security measures.

TABLE 4
SIGNIFICANT VOLUNTARY REPATRIATIONS
1988

Voluntary repatriation numbers reflect estimates of refugees who spontaneously returned to their homelands, as well as those people who participated in formal programs administered by UNHCR. Because this is not a comprehensive list, no total is given.

To	From	NUMBERS
Burundi	Rwanda	53,400
Chad	Cameroon, Central African Republic, Sudan	3,500
Ethiopia	Djibouti	5,000
Mozambique	Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe	31,800
Uganda	Sudan	86,400
Zimbabwe	Botswana	2,650
El Salvador	Honduras and others	2,450
Guatemala	Mexico and others	1,830
Nicaragua	Honduras and others	8,300
Bangladesh	India	1,500
Iraq	Iran and Turkey	46,470
Sri Lanka	India	37,080

TABLE 5
PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF THE WORLD'S REFUGEES IN NEED OF PROTECTION AND/OR ASSISTANCE

The following table identifies those countries that have generated the greatest number of refugees still in need of protection and assistance. The counts may understate the total number of refugees from a given country, as asylum nations do not always specify the origin of refugees within their borders. Also, this table does *not* include populations considered to be in refugee-like circumstances and listed in Table 2, such as Haitians, Guatemalans, Salvadorans, and Nicaraguans, *many of whom are refugees*.

Afghanistan	5,927,180*
Palestinians	2,273,090
Mozambique	1,147,000*
Ethiopia	1,101,200*
Iraq	508,200
Angola	395,700
Sudan	355,000
Cambodia	354,190*
Somalia	350,000*
Iran	348,800*
Rwanda	217,800*
Burundi	186,600
Western Sahara	165,000
El Salvador	152,500*
China (Tibet)	112,000
Sri Lanka	91,500
Philippines	90,000*
Namibia	81,400
Laos	78,890
Vietnam	73,920
Yemen (PDRY)	55,000*
Nicaragua	54,760*
Zaire	53,200
Bangladesh	48,500
Guatemala	43,280*
Chad	41,300

*Indicates that sources vary significantly in number reported.

TABLE 6
REFUGEES IN NEED OF PROTECTION AND/OR ASSISTANCE IN RELATION TO INDIGENOUS POPULATION AND PER CAPITA GNP OF THE ASYLUM COUNTRY

Top 15 Countries
(in order of refugees-to-population ratio)

The sheer size of refugee populations should not be considered the only indication of the gravity of a situation. Both the relative size of indigenous populations and the economic strength of asylum countries, for example, are important considerations. Table 6 presents refugee populations in relation to the size of receiving countries' indigenous populations and per capita gross national product.

Asylum Country	Ratio (Refugee/ Population)	Population (In Millions)	Number of Refugees	GNP Per Capita
Jordan	1/4	3.8	870,490	$1,540
Swaziland	1/10	.7	70,700	600
Lebanon	1/11	3.3	294,080	N/A
Malawi	1/12	7.7	630,000	160
Iran	1/18	51.9	2,807,000*	N/A
Somalia	1/21	8.0	365,000*	280
Pakistan	1/30	107.5	3,572,000	350
Sudan	1/35	24.0	693,600	320
Syria	1/43	11.3	265,220	1,560
Belize	1/49	.2	4,100	1,170
Zambia	1/50	7.5	149,000	300
Zimbabwe	1/57	9.7	171,500	620
Burundi	1/68	5.2	76,000*	240
Ethiopia	1/69	48.3	700,500	120
Costa Rica	1/75	2.9	38,700	1,420
Gaza Strip	1/1.5	.7	459,070	N/A
West Bank	1/2.3	.9	385,630	N/A

*Indicates that sources vary significantly in number reported.

TABLE 7
1988 CONTRIBUTIONS TO SELECTED INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE AID AGENCIES

Top 20 Countries
(Ranked by contribution per capita)

Country	Contribution Per Capita	Population (in millions)	Contribution + (millions)	GNP Per Capita
Norway	$6.54	4.2	27.5	$15,480
Denmark	6.15	5.1	31.4	12,640
Sweden	4.94	8.4	41.6	13,170
Switzerland	3.91	6.6	25.9	17,840
Finland	2.62	4.9	12.9	12,180
Canada	1.50	26.1	39.2	14,100
Netherlands	1.21	14.7	17.9	10,050
Luxembourg	1.00	.4	.4	15,920
United States	.93	246.1	231.3	17,500
Germany (FRG)	.81	61.2	54.6	12,080
United Kingdom	.81	57.1	46.4	8,920
Italy	.77	57.3	44.4	8,570
Japan	.62	122.7	77.2	12,850
Saudi Arabia	.61	14.2	8.7	6,930
Kuwait	.57	2.0	1.2	13,890
Australia	.40	16.5	6.7	11,910
Belgium	.34	9.9	3.4	9,230
Israel	.22	4.4	1.0	6,210
Iceland	.21	.2	.04	13,370
Jordan	.15	3.8	.6	1,540

+ see note, page 36.

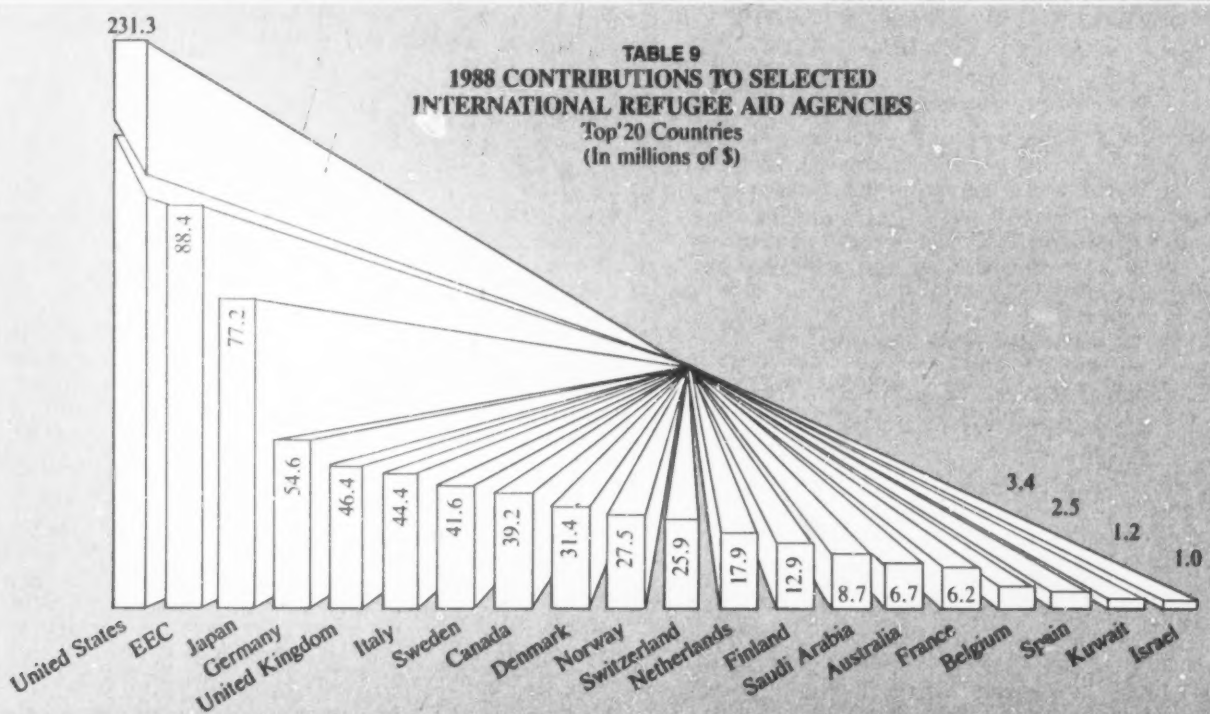
TABLE 8
REFUGEES ENTERED AND RESETTLED IN RELATION TO INDIGENOUS POPULATION
Top 14 Countries
(in order of refugees-to-population ratio)

Refugees accepted for permanent settlement are no longer regarded as in need of protection or assistance. Hence, individuals below were not included in Table 1.

Resettlement Country	1975–1987 Cumulative	1987 Only	Population (in millions)	Ratio Refugees/ Population
Namibia	40,000	N/A	1.7	1/43
Australia	150,859	11,092	16.5	1/109
Canada	223,637	23,348	26.1	1/117
Sweden	66,753	16,545	8.4	1/126
Denmark	26,537	2,726	5.1	1/192
United States	1,166,188	69,921	246.1	1/211
Switzerland	19,986	830	6.6	1/330
France	169,452	12,848	55.9	1/330
New Zealand	9,255	799	3.3	1/357
Austria	16,716	1,113	7.6	1/455
Norway	9,141*	1,043	4.2	1/460
Germany (FRG)	71,348	8,231	61.0	1/855
Netherlands	15,115	2,381	14.7	1/973
Spain	30,571	4,182	39.0	1/1,276

NOTE ON TABLE 8: The primary source for numbers of refugees resettled was the U.S. State Department. Countries that have established resettlement programs generally provide particularly precise data, but data were not available for all countries for all years. An asterisk (*) denotes that statistics were unavailable for 1975–1981.

TABLE 9
1988 CONTRIBUTIONS TO SELECTED INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE AID AGENCIES
Top 20 Countries
(In millions of $)



NOTE ON TABLE 7 & GRAPH: Table 7 & this graph report the amounts of financial assistance provided to international agencies by countries. The relative significance of contributions should be considered not only in terms of absolute size, but also in relation to population and gross national product. Included are estimated 1988 contributions to UNHCR, ICM, and UNRWA.

Individual countries' contributions to the European Economic Community are not reflected. Bilateral aid, some forms of aid which are not exclusively or even primarily designated for refugees, and aid through such agencies as the World Bank, which may benefit refugees, are also not reflected.

AFRICA

Algeria

Algeria hosts a large concentration of long-staying Sahrawi refugees, most of whom fled Western Sahara after Spain ceded the territory, formerly Spanish Sahara, to Morocco in 1975. Following the Spanish pullout, prolonged fighting broke out among Morocco, Mauritania (which also claimed Western Sahara, though it renounced its claim in 1980), and the Polisario (Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro), an insurgent group recognized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) as the sovereign government of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic.

The exact number of Sahrawi refugees is in dispute. The Algerian Red Crescent estimates that there are 165,000 in four Sahrawi settlements—and thousands more living outside the settlements—while the U.S. government estimates a refugee population of only 50,000–100,000.

Life for the Sahrawi refugees is largely dictated by the harsh, desert climate of Algeria's southwestern Tindouf region, where the refugees reside. Refugees in the well-organized settlements have made important strides in education, health care, and economic development, but are still unable to achieve self-sufficiency in the desert environment. The Algerian government provides more than 90 percent of all assistance to the refugees, the remainder provided by international donor agencies.

The resumption of diplomatic relations between Algeria and Morocco in May led to increased speculation regarding the future of the Western Sahara. In August, UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, who had earlier visited Morocco, offered a proposal aimed at ending the war in Western Sahara. He called for a cease-fire by Morocco and the Polisario, peace negotiations and a peacekeeping force of 2,000 troops under UN and OAU auspices, and a referendum in Western Sahara on independence or continued association with Morocco.

Both the Polisario and Morocco accepted the UN proposal, but are still trying to agree on just who should be allowed to vote in the referendum. Although the peace process suffered at least a temporary setback in September, when over 1,000 Polisario troops attacked Moroccan positions in Western Sahara, in late December Morocco's King Hussein agreed to meet with Polisario representatives, thus bringing added hope for a resolution to the conflict.

Many displaced Sudanese, like this elderly Dinka, traveled hundreds of miles in search of food and protection in 1988. USCR/P. Winter

In mid-1988, thousands of Malians crossed into Algeria and entered the Sahrawi's refugee camps. Reports indicated that many of the Malians were elderly people who were having difficulty surviving in northern Mali—an area where drought has decimated livestock and destroyed crops in recent years—and were drawn by the assistance available in the refugee camps. However, other reports suggested that the Polisario may have encouraged the exodus in an attempt to boost numbers in the refugee camps in anticipation of the refugees' participation in a referendum on the future of Western Sahara. A smaller number of refugees from Niger are also living in Algeria. The Algerian Red Crescent estimates the total number of refugees from Mali and Niger to be 11,000.

Angola

Angola has lived with internal strife for 25 years. More than half of the

country's population has known no other way of life. The country's agricultural base has been virtually destroyed, and an estimated 450,000 people from the rural regions of the country have migrated to urban centers as they realized that food aid could not reach them regularly. The largest concentration of these urban displaced persons is in and around Luanda city, where many live in sprawling neighborhoods with no water and inadequate sanitary facilities. They have little or no access to cash income, or goods with which to barter for food or services.

Cuanza Sul province has 48 camps that appear to house people who have fled the province's eastern areas because of a deteriorating security situation. The Angolan government provides shelter and emergency food, but has not been able to address the need for water, sanitary facilities, or medical care. Some camps are without food for weeks or months at a time.

In northern Angola, many displaced people have remained in the bush for years, living a nomadic existence and receiving no assistance. They avoid the towns for fear of being captured or accused of being a rebel. As a result, it is impossible to determine their number.

The health situation in Angola, and especially in the camps for displaced people, has reached a crisis. Many health facilities in the urban areas lack the capacity to absorb the influx of displaced people who need medical attention, while health facilities in rural areas suffer from rebel attacks, as well as from shortages of personnel and supplies.

The recent cease-fire and troop withdrawal negotiations by the governments of Angola, Cuba, and South Africa are not expected to have an immediate effect on the critical condition of displaced people in Angola, as the conflict between the government and UNITA is likely to continue.

Despite Angola's internal problems, the country hosts some 95,700 refugees. Most of these are Namibians, including 5,000 new arrivals during 1988. There are also smaller numbers of Zaireans and South Africans.

UNHCR assistance to Namibian refugees is targeted toward housing and agricultural production and is administered by the Southwest African People's Organization, which has been waging a guerrilla war for Namibian independence from South Africa. South African refugee settlements are administered by the African National Congress, which seeks to overthrow the minority government in South Africa. Assistance to Zairean refugees, who have chosen to stay in Angola despite an amnesty declared by Zaire's president in 1983, is provided by UNHCR through the Angolan government's State Secretariat for Social Affairs.

Botswana

Botswana provides asylum to some 2,700 refugees, mostly from Zimbabwe, but also from other countries, principally South Africa, Namibia, and Angola. A majority of the refugees reside in Dukwe settlement, while about 1,000 live in urban centers. The government of Botswana has repeatedly asserted a dual commitment with respect to those seeking asylum—on the one hand, to accept refugees as a matter of humanitarian principle and, on the other, to prevent its territory from being used to launch attacks against its neighbors. The government has acknowledged, however, that it has not always been able to control movements across its borders.

Zimbabwean refugees in Botswana—who numbered as many as 12,000 in recent years—are ethnic Ndebele who originally fled ethnic and political violence in Matabeleland, southwest Zimbabwe. In 1985 and 1986, erratic but generally improving security in Matabeleland encouraged about two-thirds of the refugees to repatriate to Zimbabwe. Political developments in Zimbabwe slowed repatriation in 1987. However, during 1988, 2,750 more refugees from Dukwe settlement repatriated to Zimbabwe. UNHCR expects the repatriation of refugees to Zimbabwe to continue in 1989.

South Africa has threatened the security of small numbers of South African refugees in Botswana by launching direct cross-border attacks and by creating a destabilized environment with the Botswanan host population. In 1985 and 1986, South African Defense Forces (SADF) launched raids against alleged African National Congress (ANC) targets in Botswana, resulting in the deaths of a number of Botswanan civilians. This led some citizens of Botswana to deny housing to refugees and in other ways to discourage their presence.

In March, commandos from the SADF attacked a house in the suburbs of Gaborone, Botswana's capital, killing four people and reportedly setting the bodies and the house ablaze. The South African government claimed that the four were terrorists, while Botswana said that two female victims were Botswanan citizens—a third female victim was unidentifiable—and one male victim was a South African refugee. The government of Botswana, concerned by incidents such as this, has requested the United States and other Western governments to increase their resettlement of South African refugees now in Botswana.

Burundi

Burundi hosts a substantial but relatively stable refugee population. The vast majority of the estimated 76,000 refugees in Burundi are Rwandans who arrived in the 1960s and early 1970s. The government of Burundi estimates the refugee population at nearly three times that number, but their figure includes more than 140,000 Rwandans who are fully integrated economically and socially. Only about 20,000 refugees, mostly Zaireans but also including several hundred Ugandans, currently receive UNHCR assistance.

In August, violent clashes in the north between Burundi's mostly Tutsi army and Hutus, the nation's largest ethnic group—which left between 5,000 and 20,000 (mostly Hutu) dead—led some 55-60,000 Hutu refugees to flee into Rwanda. Tens of thousands other Burundians were also internally displaced by the violence.

The 1988 massacres in Burundi reportedly began with a series of tragic misunderstandings. Although the 13-month old government of Major Pierre Buyoya had taken measures aimed at reducing the level of discrimination against Hutus, local Tutsi administrators remained repressive. Between May and July, the army began maneuvers in northern Burundi, without any explanation being offered to Hutu farmers in the area. Some Hutus, fearing that the army would attack them, destroyed bridges to halt the army advance and killed one Tutsi soldier. Following a threatening and inflammatory speech by a Tutsi mayor, a group of Hutus, fearing that they were going to be attacked, massacred several hundred Tutsi civilians. The Tutsi-controlled army, which according to the Burundian government was sent to reestablish order, then went on a six-day rampage, causing the thousands of deaths and displacement.

In October, Burundian president Buyoya announced unprecedented changes in the government. Hutus were given equal (although still not proportional) representation in the Cabinet and, for the first time in the country's history, a Hutu was named prime minister. In early November, UNHCR chaired a meeting with representatives of Rwanda, Burundi, and Zaire to pave the way for repatriations. By year's end, most of the Hutus had returned to Burundi, where UNHCR has planned a program of assistance for returnees.

Thousands of refugees fled from Burundi into Rwanda in 1988. UNHCR

Cameroon

During 1988, Cameroon continued to provide asylum to a gradually diminishing number of Chadian refugees and a small but relatively stable population of refugees from other African countries.

The Chadian refugee population has fluctuated significantly during this decade as the complex political and security situation in Chad has variously impelled some Chadians to seek asylum and encouraged others to return home. The majority of Chadians in Cameroon—some 35,000 to 45,000—have not sought refugee status. They live in the northern part of the country, where they have largely integrated into the local economy.

During 1988, 2,600 Chadian refugees repatriated under UNHCR auspices. Most of the approximately 4,400 registered Chadian refugees remaining in Cameroon reside in the UNHCR-assisted camp at Poli/Faro.

The non-Chadian refugees in Cameroon include some 100 Namibian students, as well as about 200 refugees from various other countries, including South Africa, Angola, and Zaire.

Central African Republic

Chadian refugees began entering the Central African Republic (CAR) in 1984, as civil conflict in southern Chad intensified. By mid-1985, their numbers had reached approximately 50,000. As security in Chad improved in late 1985, many refugees began returning to their homeland voluntarily. By the end of 1985, only 30,000 Chadians remained in the CAR. Between 1986 and 1988, further large-scale repatriations of Chadians, both spontaneous and UNHCR-assisted, reduced the refugee population in the CAR to some 3,000 at the end of 1988. Most of the Chadians still in the CAR are urban refugees who live in the capital, Bangui, and are assisted by UNHCR, while the remainder are self-sufficient rural refugees living at Boubou, an agricultural settlement.

The Central African Republic also provides asylum to approximately 100 refugees of various other nationalities.

Djibouti

More than 45,000 Ethiopians entered Djibouti during and following the 1977–78 Ogaden war between Ethiopia and Somalia. A majority, however, returned to Ethiopia in 1983 and 1984, both spontaneously and through a much-criticized official repatriation program. Most of the refugees who remained—primarily rural refugees from the Harerge region of Ethiopia—were grouped at the one remaining refugee camp, Dikhil. Contrary to goverment policy, some asylum seekers of urban background continued to reside in the capital, along with a significant number of undocumented aliens whom the government has long considered a problem. Both groups were subject to arrest and sometimes deportation by the Djibouti authorities.

The refusal of the remaining refugees to leave severely taxed the patience of the authorities in tiny, resource-poor Djibouti. They believed that it was safe for most of the refugees to go home, a view shared by UNHCR in the case of the rural refugees. A new repatriation program was therefore begun in 1986. Although the second program received much less international criticism than the earlier one, it led to the repatriation of less than 4,000 refugees in over a year.

Relations between refugees/asylum seekers, UNHCR, and the Djibouti government were strained. Some refugees complained about the repatriation programs, and about UNHCR's protection role. Several incidents involving refugees—including the 1987 deportation of a group of refugees who had protested the repatriation programs—focused

world attention on Djibouti and brought criticism to the Djibouti authorities.

In late 1987, UNHCR and the government of Djibouti embarked on a census of the refugee population. As a result of the census, almost 6,500 of the 14,000 refugees at Dikhil were said to be Djibouti nationals. During 1988, UNHCR and the government of Djibouti assisted these people to move out of the camps. The voluntary repatriation program—which had been suspended early in the year as a result of mounting concern in the refugee community—was resumed, and more than 5,000 refugees were repatriated to Ethiopia between October and December. At the end of 1988, only some 2,000 Ethiopian refugees remained in Djibouti.

Egypt

As of March 31, 1,160 refugees were registered with UNHCR in Egypt. Most of them were Ethiopian students who have asylum in Sudan, but who have been admitted to Egypt to pursue their education. About a quarter of the registered refugees are elderly stateless Europeans who have been in Egypt for 30 years.

Several thousand additional refugees are believed hosted informally by Egypt, including dissidents from Libya. Egypt's reputation as a haven for asylum seekers was damaged, however, by two cases of refoulement in 1988. In March, USCR wrote to the Minister of Interior in an urgent plea not to return three Iraqi refugees. They were returned, however, and are believed to have been executed in Iraq. In October, USCR again wrote to the Interior Minister, this time protesting the refoulement of five Somali military cadets. The young men had been accepted by UNHCR for refugee processing prior to their forced repatriation by Egyptian military authorities. The five were arrested upon their return and reportedly remained under detention in Somalia at the end of the year.

Although the Egyptian government did respond to USCR inquiries for general information about refugees, it did not respond to the two emergency appeals. However, the government was reported to have re-established a cabinet-level refugee board as a result of these incidents.

Because Egypt is outside UNRWA's area of operations, the 50,000 to 70,000 Palestinians living there are ineligible for UNRWA refugee assistance. They are not granted permanent residence, and must renew their residence permits every 10 months, even for those who have been living in the country for nearly 40 years.

As a result of restrictions on employment opportunities, including bans on Palestinians as the sole owners of land or commercial ventures, many Palestinians are unemployed. Palestinians are not permitted to enroll their children in state schools, and post-graduate opportunities for Palestinians are severely limited.

The fate of 4,500 Palestinians stranded on the Egyptian side of the border after the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai in 1982 remained unresolved in 1988. Most of this group remain unemployed and are assisted by UNRWA.

Thousands of Angolans have lost limbs when stepping on landmines. ICRC/Y. Muller

Ethiopia

Long known as one of Africa's largest refugee-producing countries, Ethiopia now also hosts one of the continent's largest refugee populations. Escalating civil wars in Sudan and Somalia led hundreds of thousands of refugees to seek asylum in Ethiopia during 1988.

Sudanese refugees have fled to Ethiopia since 1983 to escape the expanding conflict between the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and Khar-

toum government forces. Beginning late 1987, however, the outflow of refugees from Sudan into Ethiopia increased dramatically. By the end of 1988, UNHCR estimated the total population of Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia at some 350,000, 11,500 of whom had arrived during the last three months of 1988, after the summer-long rainy season.

Among the causes of the Sudanese refugees' flight: the raging civil war; massacres of unarmed civilians; attacks by tribal groups supplied with arms by the Sudanese government; and famine, caused largely by the war's disruption of food production and distribution—and the refusal of both the government and the SPLA to cooperate with relief agencies' efforts to bring in food aid. It is estimated that more than 20 percent of those who set out for Ethiopia died en route.

The physical condition of Sudanese refugees arriving in Ethiopia has been among the worst ever seen. Many of them are boys and young men whose families were killed or fled to other parts of Sudan in search of food. At Fugnido refugee camp—sometimes referred to as the "children's camp"—approximately 18,000 of the camp's 44,000 residents are unaccompanied minors.

The Ethiopian government, UNHCR, and international aid agencies were strongly criticized by many groups, including USCR, for their response during the early stages of this refugee crisis. Despite the availability of in-country resources and the fact that the emergency was taking place in areas well-removed from insurgencies in northern Ethiopia, the arriving refugees' most basic needs—food, sanitation, and particularly medical care—were not met in an adequate and timely fashion. Criticism of the relief effort diminished during 1988 as refugees' needs were better met. In the last months of 1988, the refugees' nutrition status improved considerably, and mortality/morbidity rates declined. In August, UNHCR and a Swedish aid group sent a team to assess the psycho-social needs of the children at Fugnido, many of whom had experienced considerable emotional trauma before and during their flight.

Flooding, which followed heavy rains from July through September, caused setbacks in UNHCR's relief efforts. Roads were damaged, and some 45,000 refugees were displaced. In October, Fugnido was completely cut off by flooding, and food had to be airlifted into the camp.

UNHCR plans to upgrade the road to Fugnido camp, which is being prepared to receive some 100,000 Sudanese refugees currently at Itang. The more than 120,000 refugees who will remain at Itang will be able to engage in more agricultural activities.

Although a small number of Somali refugees entered Ethiopia in 1987, it was during the summer months of 1988 that a massive influx of some 350,000 Somali refugees took place.

The refugees fled fighting between the Somali National Movement (SNM) and Somali government troops. At its peak, the influx reached an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 refugees per day.

The SNM, an insurgent group whose members come primarily from the northern Somali Isaak clan, has, for several years, mounted minor attacks on Somalia from its bases in Ethiopia. Following a nonaggression pact between Ethiopia (which needed to redeploy troops from the Somali border to the fighting in Eritrea) and Somalia in April 1988, the Ethiopian government expelled the SNM, which then launched a major offensive in northern Somalia. The heavy fighting that ensued is said to have left over 10,000 dead. Following the SNM's capture of most of Hargeisa, Somalia's second largest city, the Somali air force, in an effort to dislodge the insurgents, bombed the city, leaving at least twenty percent of it in ruins.

The area of Ethiopia into which the refugees fled is barren and difficult to reach. In the early stages of the emergency, many of the refugees—who are primarily urban refugees from Hargeisa—were able to help themselves by purchasing water and other necessities from local people. Once again, however, UNHCR and the Ethiopian government were reportedly slow to organize an adequate response to the emergency. Despite the fact that most of the refugees arrived in good health, by the end of 1988 malnutrition was widespread and refugees' basic needs—food, water, shelter, sanitation, medical care—were not being adequately met.

Journalists have been barred from visiting the refugee camps, ostensibly because the Ethiopian government wants to avoid provoking Somali President Siad Barre, who has not acknowledged the fighting and the existence of the refugees. As it seems unlikely that the refugees will be returning to Somalia anytime soon, UNHCR, in conjunction with a Swiss relief organization, is preparing a site for a new refugee camp that will accommodate all the Somali refugees. Transfer of the refugees to the new camp, Hartisheik B, is scheduled to begin in early 1989.

Drought in 1987, and intensified fighting in 1988—a result of major offensives by Eritrean and Tigrayan insurgents in late March and April—have left five to seven million Ethiopians dependent on foreign food. The Ethiopian government's bombing of major towns that had been centers for food aid distribution and massacre of civilians in Eritrea and Tigray have also led to substantial numbers of internally displaced persons. After Ethiopia forced most western aid workers—including the Red Cross—to leave the country in April, USAID pledged direct food aid to 2.4 million Eritreans and Tigrayans in rebel-controlled areas. Although there was no significant new outflow of Ethiopians during 1988, the more than a million Ethiopian refugees remaining in neighboring countries still makes Ethiopia one of the world's leading refugee-producing countries.

Kenya

In 1988, about 10,600 refugees were registered in Kenya. The majority are of urban background and are located in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. Approximately half the refugees are Ugandan, with significant numbers of Ethiopians and Rwandese. A small group of rural refugees are housed at Thika reception center, near Nairobi.

Between January and March, some 400 rural Ugandan refugees entered Kenya. They were part of a larger group of 2,000 refugees who began arriving in Kenya in September 1987, in the wake of fighting between Ugandan government troops and the Holy Spirit Movement. Following the Movement's defeat in December 1987, its leader, the so-called "rebel priestess," Alice Lakwena, was arrested in Kenya for entering the country illegally. Although Kenya originally said it would return Lakwena to Uganda, following her release in March, she appealed to the Kenyan High Court for asylum and was handed over to UNHCR.

During 1988, the government remained concerned about the impact that the presence of refugees—both registered and unregistered—in Kenya has on its relations with its neighbors. In July, President Arap Moi warned foreigners who had sought refuge in Kenya

not to use the country as a base for interfering in the affairs of their respective countries. He added that foreigners caught doing so would be repatriated.

Lesotho

Completely surrounded by South Africa, on which it is economically dependent, Lesotho's policy on refugees is strongly influenced by the need not to provoke South Africa. In March, the Minister of Foreign Affairs declared that Lesotho would continue to give asylum to genuine political refugees, but would not allow refugees to use the country as a springboard for attacks on their home countries.

In fact, since the present military government took power in Lesotho in 1986, the number of South African refugees has steadily declined. Newly arrived South African refugees are only offered temporary asylum until they can be transferred or resettled to a third country. Only some 260 of the 2,000 to 4,000 refugees thought to be in Lesotho are registered with UNHCR.

Malawi

During the first half of 1988, Mozambican refugees, fleeing the brutal civil war in their country, continued to enter Malawi at a rate well in excess of 20,000 per month. During just one 24-hour period in June, more than 13,000 refugees crossed from Mozambique into Malawi, part of an estimated 130,000 who arrived between May and June. In late 1988, the number of Mozambicans in Malawi grew to nearly 630,000.

This is the second consecutive year in which Malawi has received a large influx of Mozambicans, whose arrival is seriously taxing the administrative structure and health delivery system of small, landlocked Malawi, which is southern Africa's most densely populated country.

Refugees leaving Mozambique relate tales of horrifying brutalities at the hands of armed bandits and the insurgent forces of the Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO). Traumatized children, as well as adults, relate stories of kidnapping, torture, disfiguration, and rape. Increasingly, refugees have required treatment for malnutrition and shock, and many have been emotionally incapacitated by their experiences. RENAMO guerrillas—who are held responsible for the deaths of more than

A Mozambican child with his few belongings enters Malawi. UNHCR/A. Hollmann

100,000 Mozambicans—have periodically crossed into Malawi to kidnap Mozambicans or to steal from them and from Malawians.

Malawi's response to the refugee crisis has been heroic. In November 1987, Malawi acceded to the UN *Convention* and *Protocol* on the status of refugees and the OAU *Convention* governing specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa. The Malawi Red Cross Society, which coordinated all relief efforts before Malawi requested UNHCR assistance, has been joined by other international aid organizations in the effort to meet the refugees' most pressing needs. But, as the influx grows, the impact of refugees on Malawi's economy and political stability is a matter of growing concern. Already, refugees make up a population one-twelfth the size of Malawi's own (one of the world's highest ratios of refugees to local population).

In *Refugees From Mozambique: Shattered Land, Fragile Asylum—An Update*, USCR says that "Malawi's yeoman service on behalf of these refugees at a time when its own population is suffering serious food shortages . . . has strained its ability to cope." USCR recommends that "donor governments and international agencies should assist Malawi in responding to the reverberations of these crises on the country, and offer it generous support."

Discussion of voluntary repatriation for the refugees has taken place among Mozambique, Malawi, and UNHCR, and some mechanisms have been set in place for their return. In its 1988 report, USCR expressed concern that, considering the continuing violence in Mozambique, emphasis should be on protecting the refugees rather than a repatriation plan.

Mozambique

Very often, refugees are a barometer of massive human rights abuse—even genocide—in their home countries, that would otherwise go unnoticed. There is perhaps no better example of this today than Mozambique, where more than one million refugees have fled to Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and even South Africa, and where some two million have been displaced from their own homes within Mozambique and another two million otherwise affected.

The situation in Mozambique differs in some important respects from the typical refugee pattern. In most cases, refugees are fleeing persecution or violence perpetrated by their own government. In the case of Mozambique, they are fleeing a situation in which their own government is unable to protect them against massive, often unspeakable violence perpetrated against them by the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), an insurgent group that has demonstrated utter disregard for the dignity and integrity of the human person.

The armed conflict and natural disasters have caused severe food shortages. Farming areas have been devastated, and the country's infrastructure is virtually non-existent. Supply convoys are under constant attack, roads are mined, and bridges blown up or washed away by floods. The Mozambican Red Cross estimates that 6 of every 14 Mozambicans are in need of international food assistance, with 3 of those 6 being displaced people. Medical care is also severely constrained. Since 1981, 800 health centers and posts have been destroyed or seriously damaged, and only 17 of 27 rural hospitals continue to function.

Between April and June of 1988, more than 350,000 people were displaced from Lago and Guru Districts and Tete Province, while 20,000-30,000 refugees are

estimated to have fled to Malawi each month during the latter part of the year.

Mozambican refugees in neighboring countries, and displaced people within Mozambique, tell disturbingly similar tales of horrifying brutalities at the hands of RENAMO. In April, a devastating U.S. State Department report documented the pervasive pattern of atrocities by RENAMO against civilians. Refugees interviewed said RENAMO makes no attempt to win the hearts and minds of civilians. Instead, the relationship is almost exclusively based on a harsh extraction by RENAMO of labor and food. The report conservatively estimates that more than 100,000 civilians have lost their lives directly as a result of RENAMO violence. Refugees interviewed implicated RENAMO forces in about 94 percent of the killings and atrocities inflicted upon them and their neighbors, causing them to flee.

The report states that the 170 refugees interviewed reported "many hundreds of cases of systematic forced portering, beatings, rape, looting, burning of villages, abductions and mutilations. . . . That the accounts are so strikingly similar by refugees who have fled from northern, central, and southern Mozambique suggests that the violence is systematic and coordinated."

The army of the government of Mozambique has itself at times been engaged in abuse of civilians. But, with some exceptions, the abuses that refugees have charged to the government's armed forces do not appear to be systematic, and are not accompanied by the wanton excesses often attributed to RENAMO.

Despite the continuing violence in Mozambique, and the fact that more than 20,000 Mozambican refugees continued to flee to Malawi each month, Malawi, Mozambique, and the UNHCR signed an agreement in December to initiate a program of voluntary repatriation to Mozambique. USCR has stated that, at a time when more than 20,000 people a month are fleeing a country, the return of other refugees to that same situation should not be promoted.

Furthermore, as a first step in the effort to bring the violence in Mozambique to an end, USCR has recommended that all sources of outside help and support to RENAMO must be completely severed, and that the legally constituted government of Mozambique be provided the assistance and support necessary to bring about a return of peace and security to the long-suffering people of Mozambique.

Rwanda

In June, the president of this small nation, one of the world's most densely populated, said that the country did not have the resources to allow the return of its many ethnic Tutsi citizens who live as refugees in Uganda and other countries. Ironically, beginning late August, Rwanda received a major influx of some 55,000 ethnic Hutu refugees from neighboring Burundi.

At least 352,000 Somali refugees fled to Ethiopia this year. UNHCR

Conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi is a regional phenomenon in which large numbers of both groups have died over the last three decades. In 1988, the events that spurred so many Burundians to flee their homes—the massacres of between 5,000 and 20,000 civilians in Burundi—shocked the international community. The Hutu ethnic group represents 85 percent of the population in Burundi, but is ruled by the Tutsi minority in what some have described as "ethnic apartheid." The Tutsi, who originate in the Horn of Africa, conquered the Hutus in Burundi some 400 years ago and have dominated them since. In 1972, a Hutu revolt in which thousands of Tutsi were killed led to a Tutsi slaughter of more than 100,000 Hutus in Burundi. Some 19,000 Burundian Hutus who fled the 1972 massacres remain in Rwanda, and a further 156,000 remain in Tanzania. Equally large-scale killings of Tutsi have taken place in Rwanda, where the majority Hutus are now in power.

Between November and December, all but 1,600 of the 55,000 Hutu refugees who had entered Rwanda in 1988 repatriated to Burundi. More than 7,100 returned under UNHCR auspices, while others returned by their own means. UNHCR has planned a program of assistance for returnees in Burundi.

Somalia

Following a major escalation of the civil war in northern Somalia in May, there has been little reliable information as to what has happened to the many refugees from Ethiopia who were living in refugee camps in the region. The refugees—most of whom are ethnic Somalis of the Ogaden clan or Oromos—are apparently not among the Somalis of the Issak clan who fled to Ethiopia after the fighting. Yet some of the refugee camps are said to be in large part deserted. UNHCR withdrew all expa-

triate staff from the north in June, and few foreigners have been allowed to visit the area since.

The fighting, between insurgents of the Somali National Movement (SNM) and government troops, is said to have left more than 10,000 dead and much of Hargeisa, Somalia's second largest city, badly damaged. Although the SNM briefly captured Hargeisa, they subsequently pulled out, leaving the city virtually deserted and more than 300,000 people homeless.

Somalia received strong criticism for some of its actions during the war. A report by Amnesty International accused the Somali government of killing unarmed civilians. According to other reports, some Ethiopian refugees in the north—both ethnic Somalis and Oromos—were forcibly conscripted into the Somali army.

Although by September the government regained the upper hand in the north, the fighting has left Siad Barre's government in a shaky position. There is said to be clandestine support for the SNM in the capital, Mogadishu, and the delicate balance of power between Somalia's clans has received severe blows.

In what could be one of the organization's most far-reaching recent policy decisions, UNHCR has decided to withdraw assistance to Ethiopian refugees in Somalia by mid-1990. The reasons given by UNHCR for its unilateral decision were that the conditions giving rise to the refugees' exodus no longer exist—as witnessed by the large-scale spontaneous repatriations that have taken place in recent years—and that the normalization of relations between Ethiopia and Somalia in April removed any remaining barriers to the refugees' return. Other sources claim that persistent corruption in Somalia's refugee assistance program and the strained relationship between UNHCR and the Somali government have been equally important factors in UNHCR's decision.

UNHCR's plan calls for a gradual withdrawal of assistance to refugees in Somalia, coupled with an increased program of assistance to returnees in Ethiopia. Refugees who show good cause why they cannot return to Ethiopia would be assisted to integrate into the Somali economy.

The earliest refugees to enter Somalia were relatively small numbers of Oromos who fled fighting between the Oromo Liberation Front and Ethiopian troops in 1976. The greatest influx of Ethiopians into Somalia occurred in

These southern Sudanese children fled the besieged town of Torit. Often, their only clothing is made of burlap bags from earlier food distributions. USCR/R. Winter

1978, following Somalia's defeat in the Ogaden war and reported reprisals by Ethiopian troops against Somali and Oromo populations of the Ogaden and southern provinces of Ethiopia. Since then, further influxes have taken place in response to drought in Ethiopia in 1984-85, and to Ethiopia's forced "villagization" program in 1985-86.

The actual number of refugees in Somalia's 43 refugee camps has been a subject of controversy since the 1978 influx, with the government of Somalia and UNHCR negotiating "planning figures" (most recently 840,000) regarded as much too high by donor governments. The current planning figure does not take into account the more than 400,000 refugees who returned on their own to Ethiopia (where they received UNHCR assistance), leaving a balance of about 365,000 refugees in Somalia. The Somali government does not acknowledge that any refugees have repatriated other than the 5,000 or so who have participated in the official repatriation organized by UNHCR. A UNHCR-sponsored and Somali government approved re-enumeration exercise, aimed at determining the actual number of refugees, began in 1987 and continued during 1988. Results are expected in 1989. Various local settlement projects sponsored by UNHCR have met with only limited success.

For the majority of refugees in Somalia—those far from the fighting in the north—their tenth year of life in refugee camps has brought little that is new. Some, however, have been luckier. Since the publication of reports by the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Amnesty International drawing attention to the plight of Ethiopians detained in Somali prison camps at Haway and Shelembod, the International Committee of the Red Cross has been given access to prisoners at Haway, many of whom have subsequently repatriated to Ethiopia, and the Canadian government has resettled a substantial number of former detainees from Shelembod.

South Africa

Mozambicans have, for more than a century, entered South Africa seeking work as migrant laborers—an arrangement that has proved profitable for both countries. Since 1984, however, it is largely the violence inflicted upon the civilian population of Mozambique that has led up to 180,000 Mozambicans to seek refuge in South Africa. Unlike their 63,000 compatriots who work in the country legally, these refugees are considered illegal immigrants by the South African government, which has no legal or organizational mechanism for determining refugee status (South Africa is not a signatory of the UN *Convention* or *Protocol* relating to the status of refugees and has no UNHCR presence).

The road to South Africa is a particularly hard one for Mozambican refugees. They must first be able to escape from their home area. Before reaching the border, they must pass minefields and, beyond the minefields, a ten-foot high security fence patrolled by South African Border Police and Defense Forces. Sections of the fence have been electrified, and some 40 to 50 refugees have reportedly died of electrocution, including at least 16 in the first half of 1988. Those who find ways across the fence must evade detection, or they will be repatriated to Mozambique. In the first eight months of 1988, about 21,000 Mozambicans were forcibly returned. It has been alleged that young male refugees caught inside South Africa are forcibly recruited for service with the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO).

The refugees who make it safely into South Africa do not settle in the border areas but move further inland, to the black African "homelands"—part of the system established by the South African government to perpetuate apartheid—or to the industrial, mining, and agricultural areas around Johannesburg. In the homelands of Gazankulu and KaNgwane, following strong representation from the homeland authorities, the South African government has allowed the refugees to remain as "visitors" and to receive assistance from international and local aid agencies. In Kwazulu, however, local authorities have been less tolerant, and there have been reports that some Mozambicans have been forcibly repatriated.

Able-bodied male refugees generally by-pass the homelands and make their way to the Johannesburg area in search of illegal employment in the mines, factories, or large farming estates. Those who are discovered working illegally, along with Mozambicans caught by the authorities before reaching the sanctuary of a homeland, comprise the bulk of the 2,000 refugees and immigrants that South Africa either forcibly repatriates or deports to Mozambique per month.

On July 1, South African President Pieter W. Botha introduced three pieces of legislation that would allow stricter enforcement of residential segregation. One of the bills, known as the Group Areas Act Amendment Bill, would have the effect of evicting hundreds of thousands of black South Africans from "white areas" and would impose harsh criminal penalties on millions of squatters and permit summary demolition of their homes. In a letter to South African President Pieter W. Botha, USCR expressed concern that the legislation "could result in homelessness and displacement for millions of black South Africans. . . ." and would represent "a serious derogation of basic human rights and utter disregard for due process."

Sudan

Although still host to one of the world's largest refugee populations, during 1988 Sudan became the focus of international concern not because of the refugees in that country, but because of the desperate predicament of millions of its own citizens.

The long-standing civil war in southern Sudan, which is now being waged not only militarily, but also by controlling people's access to food, is taking an increasingly devastating toll on the people of southern Sudan. The war pits the Khartoum government, primarily representative of Sudan's Moslem, arabized north, against the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which seeks to end the cultural, economic, and religious domination of the north over the Christian and animist population of the south.

The war began at the time of Sudan's independence in 1955. It was discontinued in 1972, when the south was granted limited autonomy, but a series of political measures taken by the national government in 1983—including an attempt to impose Islamic law throughout Sudan—sparked renewed fighting, which has intensified each year since then.

It is estimated that two million—out of a total population in southern Sudan of six million—have been displaced from their homes, and that between 260,000 and 500,000 have died of starvation. Some 350,000 have fled into Ethiopia as refugees, as malnourished as any refugees seen in modern times. Yet the situation of southern Sudanese, comparable to the much-publicized plight of Ethiopians during the 1984-85 famine in that country, remained almost unknown

in the rest of the world for much of 1988. Communications systems broke down, pervasive violence drove out many who might otherwise have reported to the world what was transpiring, and the last of the aid agencies that clung to a presence in the south were expelled by the government in April. USCR, which visited southern Sudan in July, worked to focus world attention on the plight of southern Sudanese in the latter part of 1988.

The largest groups of refugees in Sudan are from Ethiopia's north—mainly from Eritrea, Tigray and Wollo—who have been arriving in Sudan since 1967 and who now number about 660,000. Of these, some 360,000 are directly or indirectly assisted by UNHCR in either reception centers, rural settlements, or urban areas; 300,000 (according to government estimates) are spontaneously settled, mostly along border areas.

Most early refugees fled fighting between the Ethiopian government and two rebel movements—the Eritrean People's Liberation Front and the Tigray People's Liberation Front—which are seeking independence or regional autonomy for their respective areas. Following the devastating drought in Ethiopia in 1984, however, the number increased dramatically. Although a great many of the drought victims returned to Ethiopia at the conclusion of the 1984–85 emergency, about 54,000 remained behind in UNHCR reception centers.

In western Sudan, 25,000 Chadians remain in UNHCR-assisted reception centers and agricultural settlements, despite continued government and UNHCR attempts to persuade them to return to Chad.

More than 120,000 Chadians entered Sudan in 1984-85, when Chad was experiencing drought and civil conflict. Of these, some 75,000 were assisted in UNHCR and Sudanese government-sponsored reception centers, while the remainder settled themselves along the border inside Sudan. With the return of the rains and improved security in Chad beginning in late 1985, virtually all of the self-settled refugees and some of those in camps gradually returned home. In December 1987, UNHCR closed one of its two remaining reception centers. Although more than 7,000 of the center's 13,000 refugees were transferred to other sites, a large number left the camp and settled in nearby areas before they could be moved, while others may have returned to Chad—or, in the case of Sudanese who had joined the refugees in the camp, to their villages elsewhere in Sudan. Several hundred refugees returned to Chad during the early months of 1988.

Ugandan refugees in southern Sudan, who numbered as many as 350,000 in 1982, have almost all returned to Uganda. The refugees have been repatriating for several years, but faced with an alarming deterioration in the security situation in southern Sudan in 1988, more than 65,000 refugees repatriated to Uganda with UNHCR assistance, while another 21,000 returned by their own means.

By the end of 1988, there were no Ugandan refugees left in rural settlements. Some 1,160 Ugandans remain in southern Sudan's largest town, Juba, but they have registered to repatriate and are only awaiting the means to do so. A community of 2,500 Ugandan Acholis in the Yei area—who are still assisted by UNHCR and are likely to remain in Sudan—will be the only remaining Ugandan refugees in Sudan following the repatriation of the group in Juba.

Swaziland

The Kingdom of Swaziland, sandwiched between its much larger and strife-torn neighbors, Mozambique and South Africa, has been overwhelmed by refugees from those countries. Although the total number of refugees in Swaziland is not large compared with other African refugee populations, they represent nearly a one-to-ten ratio of refugees to the local population.

At the end of 1988, UNHCR was assisting 30,700 refugees in Swaziland. Of these, 24,000 are Mozambicans and 6,700 are from South Africa. However, it is estimated that there are a further 40,000 to 60,000 Mozambicans in Swaziland who are not assisted by UNHCR.

The majority of the Mozambicans have spontaneously settled along the border, a serious hardship, according to some local leaders. Others are packed into existing refugee settlements for South Africans. The Mozambican influx has disrupted the government's program to help the South Africans achieve self-sufficiency and has increased pressure on already scarce natural resources. This has raised the Swazi authorities' concern as to what will happen if the flow of refugees from Mozambique continues or increases. Although the Swazi authorities continue to apply a liberal asylum policy, during 1988 there were reports that some Mozambicans were involuntarily repatriated.

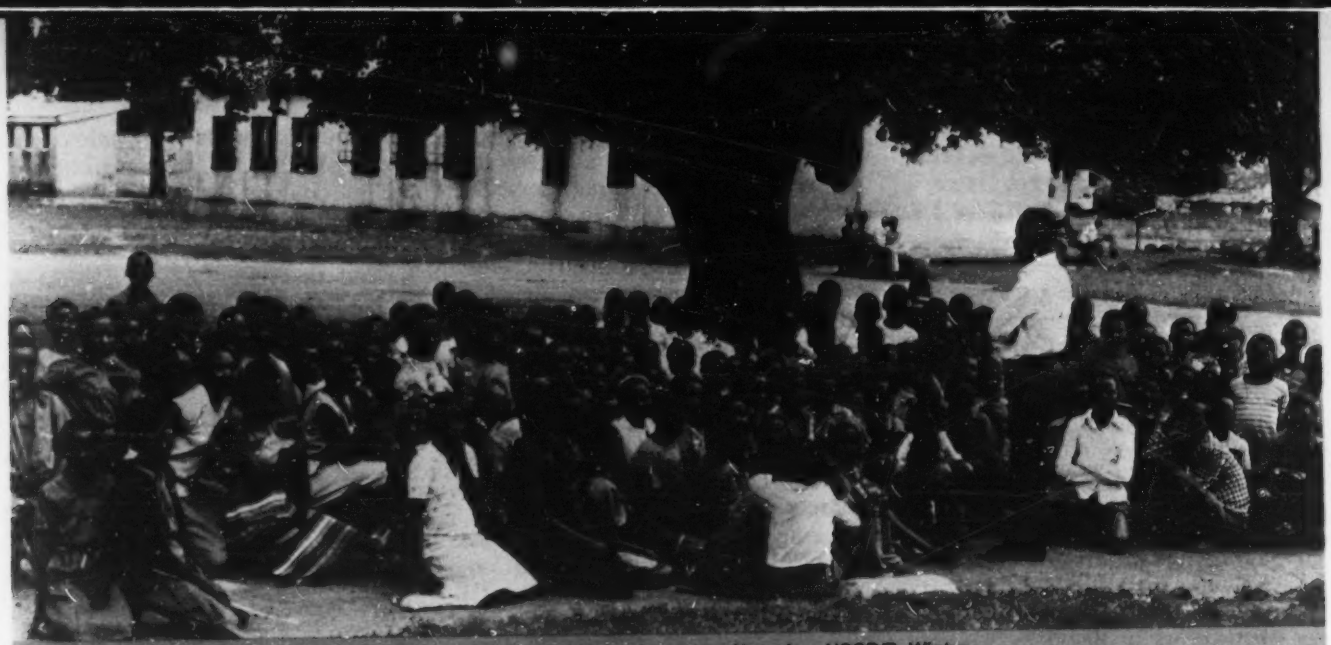
The 6,700 South African refugees in Swaziland are ethnic Swazi South Africans who fled Zulu administration of the South African "homeland" of Kwazulu and have lived in Swaziland for a number of years. To assure the government of South Africa that Swaziland will not be used as a base for operations against that country, Swaziland has, on occasion, arrested, jailed, and subsequently deported to third countries South Africans suspected of belonging to the African National Congress (ANC). Nevertheless, commando groups from South Africa have repeatedly entered Swaziland and kidnapped or killed individuals suspected of belonging to or supporting the ANC. During October, there were two separate incidents in which Swazi citizens were reportedly killed inside the Swaziland border by members of the South African Defense Force.

Tanzania

Tanzania hosts one of the most diverse refugee populations in Africa. Its generous policies towards refugees—including free education and medical services and free movement—and its shared borders with eight neighbors have made it a haven for refugees from Burundi, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, and Zaire. Tanzania has also taken the extraordinary step of offering citizenship to 21,000 Rwandan Tutsis who entered Tanzania as refugees beginning in 1959.

Among the refugees who have been in Tanzania longest are 156,000 ethnic Hutus from Burundi, who fled to Tanzania following the 1972 massacre of more than 100,000 Hutus by the ruling Tutsi minority in Burundi. In mid-1988, the president of Burundi, on a visit to Tanzania, invited the Hutus to return to Burundi. Within a short time of his visit, however, new clashes broke out between Hutus and Tutsis in Burundi, leading to the massacre of between 5,000 and 20,000 civilians, mostly Hutu. Tens of thousands of Hutu refugees fled to Rwanda, while an undetermined but small number of Hutus entered Tanzania.

Since 1985, 72,000 Mozambicans have entered Tanzania to escape violence at home. The influx reached a peak in mid-1987, when up to 4,000 Mozam-



These children are among those still displaced because of violence in eastern Uganda. USCR/R. Winter

bicans were crossing the border into Tanzania each month. Tanzanian authorities, like those in other asylum countries, feared Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) raids. The government therefore decided to move the refugees from the border areas where they had initially settled to farmland further inland. Two transit centers were also established for the 15,000 refugees most in need. During 1988, the number of new Mozambican arrivals in Tanzania has declined, and the smaller number of new arrivals appear to be following the earlier pattern of spontaneous settlement among kinsmen in border areas.

Tanzania offers asylum to several thousand South Africans and Namibians who are associated with liberation movements such as the African National Congress (ANC), and to 16,000 refugees from Zaire.

Uganda

Former Ugandan refugees continued to return to their homeland during 1988, prompted by both increasing stability within Uganda and deteriorating security conditions in Sudan. By the end of 1988, virtually all the refugees who had been living in Zaire and Sudan had repatriated to Uganda. (Ugandan refugees in southern Sudan numbered 350,000 in 1982. In December 1988, only some 3,600 remained.)

President Museveni declared an amnesty for political refugees associated with previous regimes, signed a peace agreement with former rebels of the Uganda People's Democratic Army, and ordered the release of more than 1,600 prisoners captured during his National Resistance Army's successful war for control of Uganda, all of which contributed to a perception of a much improved security situation inside Uganda. Despite the general improvements, however, continued armed conflict in some areas of northern and eastern Uganda temporarily hampered the repatriation process. In February, a UNHCR convoy enroute to Sudan to pick up returnees was ambushed in West Nile Province. Two people were killed and five wounded, and the repatriation movement had to be temporarily suspended.

In addition to resettling its own nationals returning from exile, Uganda continued to host some 118,000 Rwandan Tutsi refugees who originally fled Rwanda beginning 1959. Rwanda refuses to repatriate these refugees, who have been variously persecuted and protected by successive Ugandan regimes. Several thousand Zairean refugees who entered Uganda in mid-1987 along with a group of some 2,000 Ugandan refugees who were returning to their homes repatriated during 1988. About 1,000 Zaireans are believed to remain in Uganda.

There has been regular spill-over into Uganda of people escaping fighting in Sudan. However, most are eventually repatriated. In late 1988, a new group of southern Sudanese were located near Gulu and Kitgum in northern Uganda. More than 1,500 urban refugees of various nationalities reside in Kampala.

Uganda was once again the subject of USCR activity during 1988. In July, USCR visited Uganda to assess repatriation possibilities for Rwandese refugees and the needs of internally displaced people in eastern Uganda. Up to 350,000 Ugandans were internally displaced in 1988 as a result of unrest in the north and east.

Zaire

Zaire continues to host some 298,700 refugees from Angola, many of whom are socially and economically well integrated. Most of the Angolan refugees have been in Zaire for some time—in some cases for more than two decades—but about 80,000 have crossed the border since mid-1985, initially into the province of Shaba and most recently into the provinces of Bas Zaire and Bundundu. The flow of Angolans into Zaire in recent years revealed a growing food shortage—in addition to intensified violence—in Angola's northernmost districts, where massive disruption of food production and destruction of transport infrastructure have taken place. In order to reduce border tensions, registered Angolan refugees in Shaba were settled more than 30 miles from the Angolan border in small, dispersed, and well-organized communities. A few Angolan refugee families were said to have returned to Angola in October.

Some 21,000 refugees from Burundi and Rwanda—who have also been in the country for many years—remain in

eastern Zaire, while almost all of the more than 50,000 Ugandan refugees who once lived in Zaire have now repatriated to Uganda.

Zambia

Zambia shares borders with two of Africa's three largest refugee-producing countries—Angola and Mozambique—and receives refugees from both. It also hosts refugees from Zaire, Namibia, and South Africa.

Approximately 97,000 Angolans have fled the civil war between the Angolan government and the insurgent forces of UNITA and sought refuge in Zambia. Some 57,000 of these have been living for many years in Zambia's Western Province. Most are self-settled, but about 2,000 reside in a settlement organized by UNHCR. In Northwestern Province, some 10,000 Angolans live at the Maheba settlement, while others are settled with ethnic kinsmen in border villages. During 1988, there was a net increase of some 3,000 Angolan refugees in Zambia.

There are an estimated 30,000 Mozambican refugees in Zambia, most of whom arrived in 1985 and early 1986 and settled along the border in Eastern Province. In mid-1986, when the economic and security problems created by the refugees' presence became evident, the government agreed to establish, with UNHCR, a settlement away from the border. Refugees did not begin to move there until 1988, due to water supply problems at the site selected for the settlement, Ukwimi. There are now 4,000 Mozambicans at Ukwimi, but the camp is eventually expected to receive up to 10,000 refugees.

As in Zimbabwe, the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) has carried out cross border raids against refugees, and has kidnapped Zambian citizens. In May, 8 Zambians were reportedly killed during a RENAMO attack on a Zambian village. Zambian forces pursued the RENAMO guerrillas into Mozambique, reportedly killing 73 of the RENAMO supporters. In July, the Zambian government received official permission from the government of Mozambique to pursue RENAMO guerillas into Mozambican territory if they have attacked Zambia. In the west, UNITA forces have also been carrying out raids in Zambian territory for several years.

Faced with these security problems on its borders, Zambia decreed that all refugees entering the country after September 1985 would have to live in settlements. The Ukwimi settlement for Mozambicans was established as a result of this decree, and the Maheba settlement is being expanded to accommodate up to 25,000 Angolan refugees.

Zairean refugees, who number as many as 9,000, generally entered Zambia in the mid-1960s and late 1970s. Most are spontaneously settled in Northwestern Province, although several hundred are at the Maheba settlement and about 1,700 are self-settled in other areas.

Lusaka, the Zambian capital, is the headquarters of the African National Congress (ANC), and nearly all of the 3,000 South African refugees in Zambia are affiliated with the ANC. The ANC operates two farms that provide food to headquarters staff and guerrilla camps in Angola. In January, a bomb exploded in a Lusaka building occupied by the ANC.

Almost all of the 7,300 Namibian refugees in Zambia are registered with the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). Most Namibian refugees reside in a settlement not far from Lusaka and receive assistance from UNHCR and from a number of donor governments. This assistance, which is aimed at increasing food production, is administered by SWAPO.

Of the 3,000 South African and 7,300 Namibian refugees in Zambia, only 400 Namibian urban dwellers and 3,000 Namibians in rural settlements are assisted by UNHCR.

Zimbabwe

Like other states bordering Mozambique, Zimbabwe has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of refugees from that country in the past two years. It has only been since November 1987, however, that Zimbabwe has accorded refugee status to the Mozambicans. At the end of 1988, there were 71,000 Mozambican refugees living in four UNHCR settlements in Zimbabwe, and perhaps as many as 100,000 Mozambicans living outside the organized settlements.

Substantial numbers of refugees began flowing into Zimbabwe in 1983 and, for the most part, settled along the border. Due to the close relations between its government and Mozambique—and concern that the presence of refugees along the border might be used to mask activity against Mozambique by the Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO)—Zimbabwe took the position that the refugees were not fleeing their government, as is the case with "conventional refugees," and described them as "displaced Mozambicans." As the influx continued, the government allowed UNHCR to set up four refugee camps away from the border, though only a small minority of refugees moved into these.

In 1987, following frequent cross-border attacks by RENAMO during which hundreds of Zimbabwean civilians were killed, the army, asserting that some among the refugees may have RENAMO sympathies, took action against Mozambican refugees, forcing nearly 10,000 back across the border into Mozambique. Involuntary repatriations also occurred throughout 1988, with at least 8,000 reportedly being returned against their will.

The designation of Mozambicans as refugees—and, possibly, the government's related requirement that refugees reside only in organized settlements (taken to improve security in the border areas)—appeared to apply to tens of thousands of long-settled Mozambican migrants, as well as to recent asylum seekers. As a result, official estimates of Mozambican refugees in Zimbabwe swelled.

In an Issue Brief published in August, *Refugees From Mozambique: Shattered Land, Fragile Asylum—An Update*, USCR called upon the government of Zimbabwe to "take all necessary steps to assure that forcible repatriation of Mozambican refugees no longer occurs," and to ensure "that its program of relocating spontaneously settled refugees into refugee camps is handled with full recognition of internationally accepted refugee protection principles."

Nearly 2,650 Zimbabwean refugees repatriated from Botswana during 1988. This followed the December 1987 merger of Zimbabwe's two main political parties and an amnesty offered by Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe to armed dissidents in Matabeleland who continued to oppose Mugabe's rule. Joshua Nkomo, leader of the party which represented Zimbabwe's minority Ndebele population and now a senior minister in the Mugabe government, visited the 3,000 refugees in Botswana's Dukwe camp to encourage them to return to Zimbabwe.

EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

A Vietnamese boat refugee waits in a Hong Kong detention camp. UNHCR

Australia

In June, a committee of prominent Australians published an extensive report on the country's immigration policies, calling for an increase in the total immigration ceiling from 132,000 to 150,000 for the next three or four years. Headed by former ambassador to China Stephen Fitzgerald, the group recommended that, as part of this overall increase, the annual admissions ceiling for refugee and humanitarian programs should be raised from 12,000 to 15,000.

The report, which was commissioned by the Australian government, touched off a lively and often bitter debate on the subject of Asian immigration. Less than twenty years ago Asians comprised only 5 percent of the migrant influx. Last year, 34 percent of all new immigrants were from Asia.

The Fitzgerald report's recommendation for a nondiscriminatory approach to immigration was challenged by an opposition leader who called for curbs on the Asian influx. Local opinion polls suggested that two-thirds to three-quarters of Australians supported the idea.

In response, Prime Minister Bob Hawke called anti-Asian migration proposals "morally repugnant and economically insane" and replaced his minister for immigration, who had been criticized for his less than vigorous defense of Asian immigrants.

Hawke's Labor Party government, furthermore, signalled that, at least for one more year, there would be no disengagement from the Indochinese resettlement program, as the Fitzgerald report had suggested.

Since World War II, Australia has admitted over 470,000 refugees and displaced persons, of whom 165,000 have entered in the last decade alone. In fiscal year 1988-1989, Australia will admit about 12,000 people under refugee and special humanitarian programs, with just under half coming from Indochina. The government spends an average of $10.8 million per year on refugee resettlement and assistance.

Cambodia

Key Cambodian political rivals began 1988 as they had ended the year

before: with discussions and discord. Hun Sen, prime minister of the Vietnamese-backed People's Republic of Kampuchea, met in Paris with Prince Norodom Sihanouk, president of the tripartite Cambodian government-in-exile. Hun Sen reiterated his longstanding demand that the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops must be linked to a disarmament of the Khmer Rouge. Sihanouk demanded a timetable for a Vietnamese withdrawal and an agreement to establish a democratic government in Cambodia.

Less than two weeks after the January talks ended inconclusively, Sihanouk resigned as president of the coalition, calling it an "abominable monster." The two other coalition members are the noncommunist Khmer People's National Liberation Front, a militarily weak and demoralized faction headed by Son Sann, and the Khmer Rouge, who were responsible for the deaths of more than one million people by execution, starvation, overwork, and disease during their four-year rule.

The Khmer Rouge were driven into Thailand by invading Vietnamese forces in December 1978, and have been carrying on a war of resistance ever since, with diplomatic recognition from the United Nations and military aid from China.

In May, despite evidence that the Khmer Rouge were stockpiling weapons in the Cambodian interior in preparation for a comeback, Vietnam announced that it would withdraw an additional 50,000 troops in 1988, out of an estimated 120,000. This announcement, coupled with the removal of 25,000 Vietnamese forces from Laos, persuaded many skeptics that a Vietnamese commitment to withdraw was in earnest. The question no one could answer was how to prevent the Khmer Rouge—with a well-armed, disciplined force of 35,000—from filling the power vacuum.

Sihanouk, who had resumed leadership of the guerrilla coalition in February, resigned again on July 12, charging that the Khmer Rouge had been attacking and killing his troops. He criticized "the injustice of certain godfathers of the coalition," presumably China, "who outrageously favor the Khmer Rouge in their distribution of arms," and called on Europe, Japan, and the United States to prevent a Khmer Rouge return to power.

July 25 marked the opening of the first Jakarta Informal Meeting (JIM), which brought together Hun Sen and three leaders of the Cambodian resistance factions, along with delegations from Vietnam, Laos, and the six-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The purpose of the three-day meeting was to initiate discussion among the key actors in Cambodian affairs on a resolution of the conflict.

The result was what one observer called a "chorus of monologues" that ended in mutual recriminations and finger pointing, and little real progress. JIM II was scheduled for February 1989.

In November, ASEAN played a key role in adding significant new language to the annual UN General Assembly resolution on Cambodia. For the first time, the resolution called for the "nonreturn to the universally condemned policies and practices of a recent past," a signal of what one delegate called an "international groundswell of revulsion" at the prospect of another Khmer Rouge takeover. The general assembly supported the new language by a record 122-19 margin.

Vietnam withdrew another 18,000 troops from Cambodia in December, asserting that this movement left only 50,000 troops behind. Western diplomats suggest that the number is more like 70,000.

Since 1980, UNHCR has financed reintegration projects through the local Red Cross for Cambodian refugees returning from Thailand. In 1988 and 1989, two new projects were implemented in Kandal and Prey Veng provinces, each to serve about 2,400 people. The Cambodian government in Phnom Penh reported that 3,551 people had returned from Thailand in 1988.

At the end of the year, Cambodia still remained locked in international isolation, with the highest infant mortality rate and the lowest life expectancy in Asia, ravaged by a vicious guerrilla war and haunted by a nightmare that may yet again come real.

China

From March 1978 to February 1979, more than 270,000 northern Vietnamese, mostly of Chinese descent, fled to their ancestral homeland, as the once-friendly relations between the two countries gave way to anti-Chinese persecution in Vietnam and bloody border conflicts.

Though by no means all of the Vietnamese refugees in China have prospered, more than two-thirds are now fully self-sufficient. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which has given more than $60 million in the last decade for refugee assistance in China, has allocated $5 million in 1989 as part of a three-year program to develop income-generating and job creation projects for 73,500 refugees from Vietnam.

Despite the relative success of the Chinese resettlement program, some Vietnamese still seek to resettle in the United States. In Guanxi Province alone, there is a backlog of 2,000 applications. In the last decade, the United States has resettled an average of 25 families per year, but only to promote family reunification.

At least several hundred Tibetans fled into India and Nepal in 1988, following Chinese government crackdowns on Tibetan nationalist demonstrations in October 1987, and March 1988, in which dozens of people were killed. On December 10, a Tibetan monk was shot in a street demonstration in Lhasa marking the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In September, 26 Tibetans were forcibly repatriated by authorities in Nepal after being imprisoned for two months.

Hong Kong

On June 16, in a move that could change the face of the refugee program in Southeast Asia, Hong Kong authorities instituted a screening program for Vietnamese asylum seekers, under which new arrivals must establish a "well-founded fear of persecution" in an interview with a local immigration official. Those who are screened out are detained as illegal immigrants pending their eventual repatriation to Vietnam.

Although arrival rates remained very high in July, they began to taper off in August and dropped to only 65 in the month of October. As of the end of November, nearly 10,000 Vietnamese had arrived in Hong Kong since the new screening policy was announced. Only 34 people had been determined to be refugees, and 262 had been screened out.

On September 20, the Hong Kong government signed a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR concerning the treatment of Vietnamese asylum seekers. Under this agreement, UNHCR reaffirmed its responsibility for the care

A Bloody Year in Burma

Court Robinson

It began with a simple disagreement in a Rangoon teahouse. The argument turned violent, and the fight spilled into the street. Somehow, when police intervened, a 32-year-old student was killed. On March 17, 1988, his cremation sparked city-wide protests, and more than 30 people died as riot police and army troops moved in to stop the looting and burning.

Students took to the streets of the Burmese capital in anti-government protests again in June, and at least ten died, dozens were injured, and hundreds were arrested. This time, the unrest spread to other major cities as well. Then on July 23, after 26 years of authoritarian rule that had taken Burma from prosperity to international isolation and economic collapse, Ne Win resigned and called for a voter's referendum in September on one-party rule.

Once a leading exporter of rice, Burma now ranks among the world's ten poorest nations, with per-capita income less than $200 per year, and a foreign debt of more than $3 billion.

Despite a declaration of martial law, more than 100,000 people marched in Rangoon on August 8, calling for an end to government repression, restoration of a multi-party system, and fundamental economic reforms. They were answered with still more brutal repression. In the next four days, between 1,000 and 3,000 people died, as government troops fired indiscriminately into crowds in Rangoon, Mandalay, and Sagaing.

A nervous calm returned briefly to Burma in late August, as a second caretaker government replaced the short-lived first one and martial law was lifted. On August 23, nearly half-a-million people demonstrated, peacefully this time, in Rangoon and other towns.

Then the axe fell again. On September 18, General Saw Maung led a military takeover, removing civilian leadership in the government and declaring a ban on street demonstrations. Thousands defied the ban and, in the bloody crackdown that followed, at least 500 died and 2,000 people were arrested.

On September 20, about 250 Burmese students fled across the Thai border into the town of Mae Sot. That same day, Thai Foreign Minister Sitthi Savetsila said that the Burmese would be granted temporary asylum. "We cannot send them back right now because they would be killed," he said.

Three days later, the United States suspended all aid to Burma, totalling $12.3 million. West Germany cut off $100 million in aid; and Japan went still further, suspending $300 million and withholding recognition of the new government, pending a commitment to hold free and fair elections.

By early October, more than 500 Burmese refugees were in Thailand, and another 5,000 to 10,000 students were on the border, most of them in territory held by the Karen, an ethnic minority group that has waged a forty-year civil war with Rangoon. Some went there to avoid arrest and persecution; others came to join forces with the Karen military effort.

The arrests and killings continued in Rangoon, and the post-takeover death toll climbed above 1,000, according to foreign diplomats in the country. A leading Burmese dissident in Thailand recited this litany of abuses by the Saw Maung regime:

> There are credible reports that a crematorium has been built—and is operating—at Insein jail. Bodies have been seen floating down the river through Rangoon. Young people are being picked up on the streets of Rangoon and sent to the front to serve as porters and human mine-sweeps for the military. . . All schools are closed. . . Gatherings of more than four are illegal. . . A strict curfew is enforced.

As Burmese refugees continued to flee into Thailand, some local immigration officials detained them as illegal immigrants and even pushed them back across the border into Karen territory. Up to 850 people may have been sent back in October alone.

In November, some students began to drift back from the border into the cities, hungry, weary, and homesick for their families. Although the government had offered an amnesty for the returnees, there were reports of arrests, disappearances, even beheadings.

Amidst a storm of local and international protest, Thailand's commander of the armed forces, General Chaovalit Yongchaiyut, became the first foreign dignitary to visit Saw Maung. Upon his return home, Chaovalit announced that Thailand and Burma had agreed to open a repatriation center in Tak Province, to facilitate the return of Burmese students from Thailand.

Jointly staffed by the Thai and Burmese Red Cross, the camp was operational by December 21; less than one week later, 80 students were returned on two Burmese Air Force planes. By the middle of January, more than 200 students had gone back to Burma via the repatriation program. Amnesty International accused Thailand of forcibly repatriating at least 22 of the students, and reported that one student in the first group of returnees had disappeared.

Conditions on the border grow ever more precarious for the estimated 6,500 students there at the turn of the new year. Up to 170 have already died from malaria. Dysentery and diarrhea also pose serious problems, and medical supplies are scarce. Nutrition and sanitation are poor, shelter and clothing are inadequate, and relief assistance has been sporadic at best.

For the time being, the Burmese students at the border and inside Thailand have strong reason to fear persecution at the hands of the Saw Maung regime. The U.S. Committee for Refugees wrote the Thai government urging that they declare a moratorium on any further repatriations, unless international monitoring is available to ensure that all returns are voluntary. USCR also called for a coordinated relief effort—involving Thai, expatriate Burmese, and/or international groups—to provide needed aid along the border.

Photo of Burmese civilians in Thailand. Photo credit: Wide World Photos

and protection of all asylum seekers in Hong Kong, whether they were screened-in, screened-out, or still in limbo status. The government, in turn, made a commitment to carry out refugee determinations in accordance with UNHCR guidelines and to allow UNHCR to monitor the screening procedures and provide legal advice to those who need it.

The joint statement also spelled out guidelines for the physical treatment and accommodation of refugees in Hong Kong. UNHCR called San Yick, an 11-story factory building that housed more that 4,000 boat people, "not suitable for accommodation," and the government promised to move everyone out by the end of 1988. San Yick has been widely condemned by relief agencies, human rights groups, and the media for its overcrowded and unsanitary conditions.

At the end of November, however, San Yick still held nearly 3,000 people and, despite some minor improvements, one confidential UN report said it was still "unhealthy, dehumanizing, and dangerous."

In early October, the Hong Kong government published a judicial report concluding that correctional officers in Hei Ling Chau camp had used "unnecessary force" when they beat and kicked Vietnamese refugees following a July 19 disturbance in the camp. The report also criticized medical officers who examined 100 of the refugees involved for filing inadequate injury reports. Local human rights and relief groups accused the Hong Kong Correctional Services Department of a cover-up.

As if to counterbalance its new restrictions, Hong Kong has promised to liberalize the living conditions of all Vietnamese who arrived before June 16. Those now in closed camps will be moved in 1989 to open facilities, where they will be allowed to seek outside employment and their children will be able to attend local schools. One senior official indicated that those who were not resettled in other countries or who did not wish to return to Vietnam would eventually be offered permanent settlement in Hong Kong.

As of December, the Vietnamese boat people population stood at 25,263. New arrivals in 1988 totalled over 18,000, with about 2,500 departures for resettlement. On August 12, five Vietnamese returned home voluntarily. By the end of the year, another 300 people had requested to return, but it was not clear when arrangements would be completed.

Indonesia

In the first ten months of 1988, 1,514 Vietnamese boat refugees reached Indonesia. This was slightly higher than for the same period last year, and might have been larger still if Indonesia had not been actively pushing boats back to sea. From January to September, nearly 600 Vietnamese asylum seekers who eventually landed in Malaysia said that they first had been pushed off from Indonesia. In one incident on April 24, Indonesian soldiers fired at a boat carrying 125 Vietnamese, killing one person and wounding another.

By the end of the year, the camp population on Galang Island was only 1,946, as third-country resettlement continued, principally to the United States.

In February, the Indonesian government released 52 political prisoners from East Timor, a former Portuguese colony, which Indonesia annexed 13 years ago. Since 1975, a protracted guerrilla war, combined with famine and disease, has claimed the lives of an estimated 150,000 East Timorese. In late October, more than 220 senators and congressmen signed letters to former Secretary of State George Shultz calling for the United States to exert its influence on behalf of a negotiated settlement to the military conflict and greater access for international human rights groups.

Laos

Voluntary repatriation of Laotian refugees from camps in Thailand continued at modest rates in 1988. As of July, 116 people had returned home under UNHCR auspices, bringing the total number of returnees to 3,257 since the program began in 1980. It is estimated that another 15,000 to 17,000 people have returned home unofficially in that same period.

When Thailand, with the participation of UNHCR, instituted a border screening program for Laotian asylum seekers in July 1985, it was based on a tentative agreement that the Laotian government would take back those who could not establish a claim to refugee status. However, of the nearly 3,000 screened-out Laotians waiting in Nong Saeng detention center, the Laotian government has approved the return of only 44 people.

As of July, Laos had released an additional 350 reeducation camp prisoners, leaving about 200 in Houaphan Province and another 2,000 in Attopeu Province. Amnesty International estimates that between 10,000 and 15,000 civil servants and military personnel have been held as political prisoners for various periods of time since 1975.

Despite recent efforts by the government to liberalize the economy and encourage foreign investment, Laos remains one of the ten poorest nations on earth, with per capita income averaging only $120 per year.

Malaysia

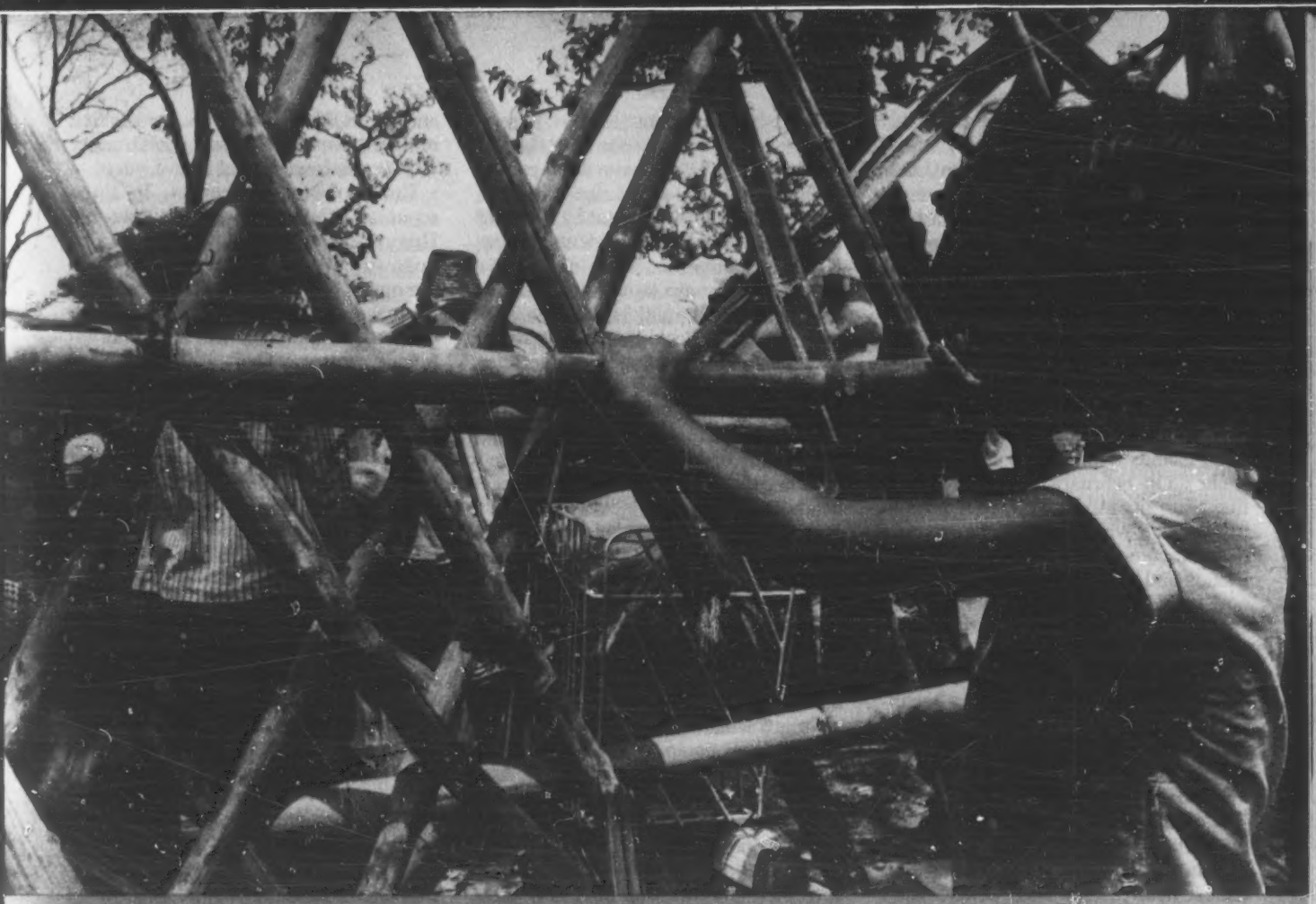
It was not a surprise that Vietnamese refugee boat arrivals in Malaysia climbed above 11,000 in 1988, given that arrivals were up throughout Southeast Asia, and that the neighboring countries of Thailand and Indonesia have been systematically redirecting boats toward Malaysia. It was no less predictable that the Malaysian government would threaten to respond with like deterrence.

In April, a senior government official announced that within one year's time the main refugee camp of Pulau Bidong would be closed. After that deadline, all Vietnamese would be considered illegal immigrants, and subject to possible deportation or pushback.

On August 29, following a visit by the Malaysian deputy prime minister to Vietnam, the two countries issued a joint statement citing Vietnam's willingness to accept the repatriation of any refugee who wished to return home from Malaysia.

As part of the agreement, a team of Vietnamese officials traveled to Malaysia in November, with hopes of persuading some number of refugees to return voluntarily. News of the visit, however, prompted a camp-wide protest in Pulau Bidong and the Vietnamese delegation cancelled its trip to the island.

In what appeared to be a breakthrough orchestrated by UNHCR, the Malaysian foreign ministry announced in December that the closing of Pulau Bidong would be implemented in a phased process taking up to two years and, most significantly, that new arrivals would be screened for refugee status under UNHCR supervision rather than pushed



More than half of the 170,000 Cambodians in Site 2 camp on the Thai/Cambodian border are under the age of 15. Stefan Ellis

back or arbitrarily detained.

Resettlement, meanwhile, continued at its typically brisk pace in Malaysia. More than 7,400 Vietnamese boat people departed for resettlement in other countries in the first ten months of 1988. Of the 12,600 refugees in Pulau Bidong and Sungei Besi as of November, just over 1,000 had been there longer than one year.

In the last decade, Malaysia has accepted for local settlement about 7,000 Cambodian and Vietnamese Moslems, and is expected to continue such a program on a limited scale. More than 250 Cambodians renounced Islam after reaching Malaysia, however, and have sought to resettle elsewhere. As of June, Australia and New Zealand had accepted 172, leaving 99 still with no offer of resettlement. Of these, 23 had ties to the United States.

An estimated 90,000 Filipino refugees, almost all of them Moslem, still live in the east Malaysian state of Sabah, having fled guerrilla warfare in Mindanao in the 1970s. Many have integrated themselves into the local society and economy, and resist voluntary repatriation efforts promoted by UNHCR, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Papua New Guinea

More than 10,000 refugees fled eastward from the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya and sought asylum in Papua New Guinea in late 1984 and early 1985. Most were fleeing persecution by Indonesian authorities and continued fighting between Indonesian troops and guerrillas of the separatist Free Papua Movement (OPM).

Since 1986, the government of Papua New Guinea, in cooperation with UNHCR, has been attempting to promote local settlement for the Irian Jayans, along with voluntary repatriation. In the last two years, the government has transferred about 3,000 people from isolated border camps to new sites in East Awin. Movements accelerated in mid-1988, following violent cross-border incidents in March, involving OPM and Indonesian forces. In a two-week period starting on May 1, PNG authorities airlifted about 900 refugees from the South Blackwater camp.

Although East Awin is now remote and undeveloped, UNHCR and the PNG government plan to make the dozen resettlement villages self-sufficient, by establishing rain water storage systems, vegetable gardens, fish ponds, livestock cultivation, primary education, and skills training courses.

Since 1986, UNHCR has assisted 2,000 Irian Jayans in returning voluntarily to Indonesia, by providing transportation, a one-time grant of food and clothing, and regular monitoring of returnees.

Thailand

Vietnamese refugee numbers are smaller than any other group in Thailand, but the sudden, wrenching blow

that struck the boat people at the turn of 1988, sent shock waves to every one of Thailand's troubled borders. On January 27, Thai marine police in easternmost Trat Province intercepted a boat carrying 40 Vietnamese asylum seekers and forced it back out to sea. The next day, the Ministry of Interior announced that all Vietnamese boats headed for Thailand would be pushed back.

Each passing day brought alarming new reports of pushbacks, boat rammings, violent deaths, and increasing numbers of refugees stranded on scattered islands without adequate food or shelter. On February 12, an investigative team organized by USCR arrived in Thailand, where it spent the next ten days documenting conditions on the islands and relaying information on the new pushback policies back to the United States. On February 24, USCR presented testimony before the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, calling for U.S. leadership in support of continued resettlement and UNHCR-supervised screening programs in order to restore asylum for Vietnamese in Thailand.

Although the Thai government modified its policies in April, pushbacks continued. According to UNHCR statistics, nearly 3,200 boat people were pushed off from Thailand in 1988. The resulting deaths may number in the hundreds. The viciousness of pirate attacks, primarily in the Gulf of Thailand, greatly increased as well. The number of rapes and abductions doubled, and the totals for dead and missing rose from 95 in 1987 to 501 in 1988.

The Vietnamese who do manage to reach Thailand safely are being moved to Ban Thad camp on the Thai-Cambodian border, where they are denied, for the time being at least, the opportunity to seek resettlement in another country. At the end of the year, the population was 4,400.

The overcrowding at Phanat Nikhom was reduced in 1988, as continued resettlement to the United States and other countries brought the Vietnamese population down from 16,000 in January to under 9,000 at the end of the year.

Whether the more than 300,000 Cambodian refugees and displaced persons in Thailand seek to return home—and most do—or settle elsewhere, they have little real alternative at the moment but to stay where they are, trapped in overcrowded and dangerous camps along the volatile Thai-Cambodian border.

By far the most dangerous of the border camps belong to the Khmer Rouge, who were responsible for the deaths of more than one million people during their four-year rule in Cambodia, before they were driven out by invading Vietnamese armies. Residents of the Khmer Rouge camps—even the "showcase" camp known as Site 8—are subjected to political extortion, denial of emergency medical care, torture, summary execution, and forcible relocation.

In the last six months of 1988, the Khmer Rouge forced more than 16,000 people out of UN-assisted camps and marched them to "repatriation villages" inside Cambodia. In November, Vietnamese troops responded predictably with weeks of heavy shelling, driving thousands back to Thailand. Just as predictably, the Khmer Rouge brought none of the wounded to international relief agencies for medical attention

Another serious problem facing Cambodians in Thailand is the impending movement of the last 14,000 people in Khao I Dang camp to Ban Thad. Khao I Dang is the one remaining Cambodian refugee camp in Thailand that is administered by UNHCR and, as such, its residents have enjoyed somewhat better protection than the displaced persons on the border, and have also been allowed to seek resettlement in another country.

Although virtually everyone in Khao I Dang has been rejected for resettlement in the United States and, in many cases, several other countries as well, a final U.S. review of these rejected cases is under way, and denials have been overturned for at least nine families. Those who are not reconsidered will be transferred to Ban Thad when the review is completed.

Many of the developments in 1988 were positive for the lowland and highland Lao. In January, UNHCR registered about 9,800 Hmong who had been living illegally in Ban Vinai camp and another 1,400 Hmong who had been stuck on the Thai-Laotian border near Nam Pun for over one year, thus making both groups eligible to seek resettlement overseas. U.S. approval rates for Hmong applications remained at about 99 percent, and more than 10,000 Hmong were resettled in 1988, virtually all in the United States.

Lowland Lao approval rates and admissions were considerably lower than this, but worldwide resettlement still totalled over 4,000 people, while arrivals in Thailand were less than half that amount. At the end of 1988, the Laotian refugee population was just under 75,000, the lowest total in five years.

But problems do persist. In three separate incidents in July, nearly 200 Hmong were pushed back to Laos. Following the forced repatriation of 33 Hmong in November 1987, which led to the massacre of all but an eight-year-old girl and prompted a wave of international protest, Thai authorities announced that local pushbacks would stop and all further repatriation would take place through UNHCR. Apparently, this directive no longer is being heeded. Indeed, one UN report suggested that several thousand Hmong are likely being pushed back to Laos every year.

Equally disturbing is the collapse of the border screening program that Thailand established in July 1985, with the cooperation of UNHCR and the support of the U.S. Embassy. Designed to screen in *bona fide* refugees and screen out the rest, the program had worked reasonably well for lowland Lao, despite reports of bribery and corruption among some Thai border officials. From the beginning of the program until September 15, more than 24,000 people have been interviewed, of whom about 21,000 were screened in and 2,700 screened out.

From the outset, however, Hmong asylum seekers have not sought access to the screening program, except in very small numbers, for fear that if they presented themselves to Thai border officials they would be pushed back. And, in a classic vicious circle, as Hmong continue to enter the country surreptitiously, pushbacks recur.

In 1988, access began to tighten for lowland Lao as well and, by the middle of the year, screening was taking place in only three of nine border provinces.

Still another difficulty with the program has been the continued reluctance of the Lao government to take back those who have been screened out. Only 45 people have been accepted back in the last two years, just one of these in 1988. Voluntary repatriation fared somewhat better, with 116 Laotians returning home in March and April.

Vietnam

Well over 40,000 Vietnamese fled their country by boat in 1988, the highest yearly total in seven years, prompting asylum countries in Southeast Asia to

institute a variety of humane and inhumane deterrence measures in an effort to end the flow. Resettlement and UN donor countries, too, while deploring the restrictive and often violent actions taken against Vietnamese refugees, acknowledged that a new international consensus would need to be forged if refugee protection were to be safeguarded in the region.

As the debate intensified on the relative merits of ongoing resettlement, screening, and repatriation, perhaps the only strategy that everyone supported was an expansion of the Orderly Departure Program (ODP), which has enabled more than 150,000 refugees and immigrants to leave Vietnam directly since 1979. ODP's best year was in 1984, when nearly 30,000 people departed Vietnam safely and legally, but for the next three years the worldwide numbers dropped, as the program fell victim to political manipulation in Vietnam and policy shifts in some of the major participating countries.

The program appeared to be back on track in 1988, with more than 15,000 people departing in the first nine months, including a record-high 3,096 in September. Particularly encouraging was the progress on Amerasians, who are expected to depart Vietnam at rates approaching 1,000 per month in 1989.

The U.S. decision to admit up to 25,000 refugees and Amerasians through ODP in fiscal year 1989 was widely applauded as a signal of a significant new commitment to expand legal migration channels. But praise soon turned to protest, when, in mid-December, the State Department cut the ODP ceiling by 5,500, in order to shift admissions numbers over to the Soviet Union. The U.S. government's public rationale for this transfer was based, in part, on an inability to secure emigration for Vietnamese political prisoners.

The United States, for many years, has urged the Vietnamese government to permit reeducation camp prisoners and their families to emigrate legally. Having released 3,820 political prisoners in February, Vietnam went still further in July, when it announced that more than 50,000 former prisoners and their family members would be allowed to leave for the United States. But only three weeks later, this permission was withdrawn, apparently to protest an unconciliatory policy statement on Vietnam made by a senior U.S. official.

Since 1975, between 500,000 and 900,000 people have spent time in reeducation camps, although the Vietnamese government asserts that fewer than 200 political prisoners remain incarcerated. In October, the Vietnamese government sentenced 21 people to prison terms for "subversive activity." Two former Buddhist monks were sentenced to death for their alleged involvement in creating the "Vietnam Human Rights Front," a move that drew letters of protest from Congress.

In December, Vietnam and UNHCR signed an agreement on voluntary repatriation, concluding a year of modest but steady progress on the issue. Earlier in 1988, Vietnamese officials had indicated that voluntary repatriation was a premature idea and would be considered only on a case-by-case basis.

As of the end of October, about 300 Vietnamese in Hong Kong were seeking to return home, along with six in Malaysia, two in Thailand and four unaccompanied minors in the Philippines.

Vietnam is still host to about 25,000 Cambodian refugees, of whom UNHCR assists about 18,000 in four rural settlements. Since 1980, more than 9,000 Cambodians have been resettled in other countries. The United States has taken over 800 Cambodians through ODP, including 427 in the first nine months of 1988.

For Amerasians who seek to leave Vietnam, bureaucratic delays can slow their progress. This young woman has tried to leave for many years. USCR/Cerquone

EUROPE

Austria

Austria has served both as country of resettlement and a point of transit for refugees traveling elsewhere. Since 1945, more than two million refugees have passed through Austria. In 1988, the large influx of asylum applicants from Eastern Bloc countries, combined with the mounting assistance costs, paved the way for a more restrictionist stance in assessing requests for asylum. Although Austria has drawn some criticism for these changes, the country still maintains comparatively liberal policies for aiding refugees.

The number of asylum applications rose steadily in the first eight months of 1988 to over 11,000, almost twice the number for the same period the previous year. Eastern Europeans comprised 85 percent of the total.

At the beginning of the year, Austria dropped its visa requirement for nationals from Poland and Hungary. The new policy, combined with the continued liberalization of travel regulations in the two socialist countries, led to a quadrupling of Polish and Hungarian asylum applications in the first four months of 1988.

In May, the Austrian government required all Poles and Hungarians to undergo a two-week clearing process. Those not granted refugee status were refused any further government assistance and asked to return home.

Austrian Interior Minister Karl Blecha said that 96 percent of Hungarian and Polish applicants are not political refugees. Since the new measures were implemented on May 9, the Austrian authorities have decided that Romanian and Yugoslav applicants are to be treated similarly.

The new measures sparked an outcry from Poles, who initiated a hunger strike in the Austrian camp of Traiskirchen, protesting what they saw as unfair treatment.

In the first eight months of 1988, Austria provided transit facilities to 9,512 persons from the USSR, mostly Soviet Jews, and 881 Iranians.

Cyprus

As a result of the events of 1974, which left Cyprus partitioned into Greek and Turkish halves, some 200,000 Greek Cypriots and another 65,000 Turkish Cypriots remain displaced.

Because of its significant population of internally displaced persons, the government of Cyprus contends that it is not able to accept refugees. UNHCR assists 63 refugees in the country, but their stay is temporary and precarious. The government attempts to deport refugees and asylum seekers as soon as possible with or without assurances of safe third-country resettlement.

France

Although the acceptance rate for those seeking asylum in France dropped from close to 40 percent in 1986 to around 32 percent in 1987 and 1988, its refugee policies remain liberal in comparison to its European neighbors. There have been recent moves to reverse the restrictionist legislation passed in 1986, which tightened entry requirements into France, eased the deportation of foreigners without proper travel documents, and gave police the power to expel foreigners without trial.

The government has since ordered that all expulsions must receive judicial review. An effort was also made to speed up the processing of asylum and naturalization requests.

Between January and June 1988, over 16,000 new applicants registered for asylum, with the largest number, 6,828, coming from Africa, followed by 4,257 from Asia, 3,863 from Europe, and 1,269 from the Americas.

Asylum seekers from Zaire numbered more than 2,000, while Turks numbered over 3,000 during the first six months of 1988. In this same period, approximately one quarter of the Turkish applicants were granted asylum. Virtually all of the approvals were for Assyro-Chaldeans, and practically none for Kurds. As the number of Turkish asylum seekers grows, fewer are being granted refugee status.

There are considerable regional disparities in asylum approval rates. Nearly 60 percent of Asian applicants for asylum receive refugee status, for example, while only one in ten applications from Africa is decided positively.

The influx of Sri Lankan Tamils, previously substantial, tapered off in 1988, with only 742 requesting asylum during the first half of the year. During this period, 42 percent received refugee status. Estimates of the total number of Tamils in France range from 12,000 to 25,000.

The French Office for Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) blames inadequate funding for the considerable backlog in asylum applications, which stood at 27,000 at the end of 1987. With the rise in the number of applications since then, it remains to be seen whether the government's goal to speed up the asylum process will actually be met.

Federal Republic of Germany

The number of asylum seekers in West Germany rose substantially in 1988 to approximately 103,000. This is nearly double the figure for the previous year, although many do not stay in Germany, but move to neighboring countries such as Belgium, France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. The increase can be attributed mainly to the loosening of restrictions on travel in Eastern Bloc countries, particularly Poland and Yugoslavia.

Poles constitute the largest group of asylum seekers in West Germany. Since the Polish government began to ease travel restrictions in 1983, 173,000 Poles have left their country, many settling in West Germany, Austria, and Italy. With no visa requirements for Poles to visit West Berlin, an average of 30,000 Poles arrive in West Germany through the city annually.

In addition to Poles and other Eastern Europeans, the nearly 40,000 new applicants for asylum in the first six months of 1988 also included large numbers from Turkey, Yugoslavia, and Iran. Reflecting the more restrictive policies that the government has adopted since 1986, the acceptance rate for asylum

applications in West Germany was 11.9 percent in the first half of 1988.

The policy for rejected asylum applicants from Eastern Europe is shifting to a more stringent stance advocating deportation. Actual deportations have been slow in coming, however, due to the lengthy procedures involved.

The German government also began a repatriation program in July 1988 for Tamils from Sri Lanka. Although announced as voluntary, some press accounts hinted that those who refused to return with the program might face deportation.

Ethnic Germans, who are not considered refugees since they automatically obtain citizenship upon arrival in the Federal Republic, continue to emigrate to West Germany from Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union in ever larger numbers. In the first eight months of 1988, 128,000 ethnic Germans emigrated to West Germany, including 72,000 from Poland, 25,000 from the Soviet Union, and 22,000 from East Germany. The generous policy for ethnic Germans has been somewhat controversial given the Federal Republic's comparatively restrictive refugee policies for other groups.

About 400 unaccompanied children, mostly from Iran, arrived at Frankfurt in the first six months of 1988 seeking refugee status. The children arriving in Germany for the most part have been given "toleration" (*Duldung*) status, which is valid for six months and includes a work permit.

Additionally, growing numbers of draft evaders from Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan are being granted asylum on the grounds that forced repatriation to their countries would lead to unusually severe punishment.

Hungary

Prompted by economic collapse, as well as ethnic and religious persecution, more than 10,000 Romanians fled across the border into Hungary in 1988, a rare example of refugees from one communist country seeking asylum in another. About 90 percent of these refugees are ethnic Hungarians from the Transylvania region, who accuse the Romanian government of cultural and linguistic discrimination. A plan to raze up to 7,000 ethnic Hungarian villages and move the residents into new "agro-industrial centers" sparked such bitter dissent, in fact, that Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu backed off the idea at least temporarily in November.

In the first eight months of 1988, the Hungarian government granted more than 8,000 residence permits to Romanian refugees, virtually all to ethnic Hungarians, and provided $6 million in resettlement assistance. Since 1981, an estimated 50,000 Romanians have entered Hungary.

The status of 2,000 ethnic Romanian refugees in Hungary remains precarious. Although part of the same exodus as the ethnic Hungarians, they are not granted residency or work authorization in Hungary, and are provided with very little in the way of relief assistance. Of particular concern, there have been reports of pushbacks by the Hungarian authorities and speculation that Hungary eventually might return the ethnic Romanians to Romania, in exchange for a relaxation of Romanian emigration policies for ethnic Hungarians.

In January, Hungary became the first Eastern Bloc country to issue five-year passports to its citizens that require no exit permits and are valid for any country in the world. Although travel has been relatively easy for Hungarians for several years, and the government claims that 99.6 percent return to Hungary, the number of Hungarian applications for asylum, particularly in Austria, rose in 1988.

Italy

Although Italy is a signatory to the UN *Convention* and *Protocol* on refugees, authorities there only accept applicants for asylum from European countries. Exceptions to this rule have been made over the years for a total of 4,000 Vietnamese and 630 Chileans who have been granted special status and permission to settle in Italy.

The UNHCR considers all other asylum applications and awards refugee status, but the Italian government does not provide funds or any other kind of assistance for these refugees. The main groups are Ethiopians (mostly from Eritrea), Iranians, and Sudanese from the southern part of the country.

The overwhelming majority of applicants for asylum registering with the Italian government come from Poland. As of January 1988, there were 13,000 Eastern European asylum seekers, 95 percent of whom came from Poland.

In reaction to the dramatic increase in Polish asylum applicants during the summer of 1987, the Italian government on certain occasions refused to let in Poles with valid entry visas whom they suspected of planning to remain. Since then, the Italian government has decided to ask Poles wishing to travel in Italy to sign a statement that they will not apply for refugee status. Because this new measure gives the authorities firmer grounds to reject their applications for asylum, many Poles not wishing to return to Poland simply travel elsewhere when their visa for Italy expires.

Apart from refugees, Italy has a population of 1.5 million undocumented immigrants, mostly from poor, underdeveloped countries. In January 1987, the Italian government instituted the "Amnesty Law," under which undocumented aliens who entered the country before that date were given six months to register without penalty for work and residence permits. The grace period for this law has subsequently been extended. Only 80,000 undocumented immigrants had registered with the authorities as of May 1, 1988, however.

At the end of 1988, there were about 4,000 Soviet Jews outside Rome, awaiting transit to the United States and other resettlement countries. About 600 have been rejected for refugee status by the United States. If their appeal is also rejected, they are eligible to enter the United States with a nonrefugee status or to seek resettlement in Israel.

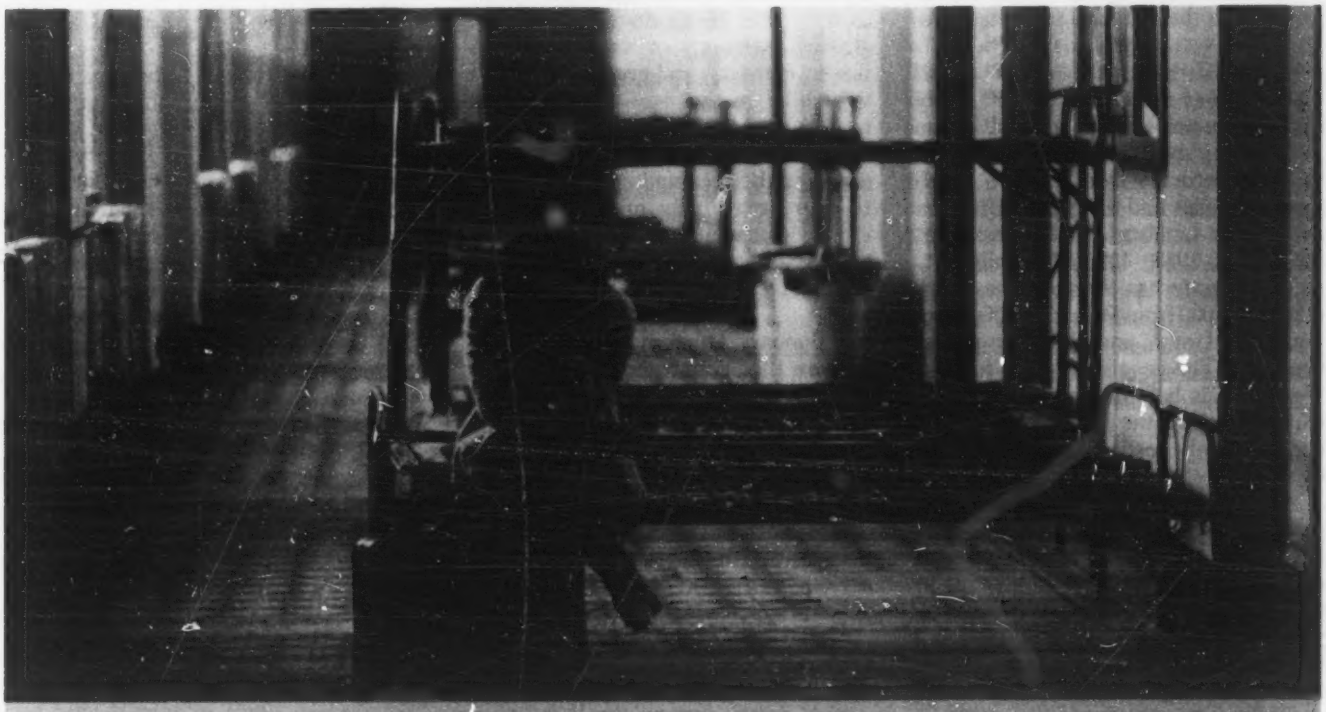
Switzerland

New regulations to tighten up Swiss asylum policy, which came into effect in January 1988, did little to deter asylum seekers, but the chances of their receiving asylum became increasingly slim. The new law imposed stricter interview procedures, including the requirement that asylum seekers apply at one of 28 designated border entry points. An estimated 85 to 95 percent of asylum applicants, however, crossed the border without authorization and applied from within the country.

The number of applicants for asylum rose in the first eight months of 1988. From January through August, there were 9,023 applications for asylum, compared with 10,913 for the whole of 1987. The approval rate for asylum, however, continued to drop. Swiss authorities granted refugee status to a mere 4.3 percent of applicants in the first four

months of 1988. This is about half of the 9 percent approval rate in 1987, which, in turn, was about half the 16 percent approval rate in 1984. A backlog of 26,495 cases was pending at the end of August.

A full two-thirds of asylum seekers came from Turkey, with applications totalling 5,733 in the first eight months of 1988. Most of these were Kurds.



An asylum seeker waits in an Austrian transit center. UNHCR/Jessen-Petersen

After a visit to Sri Lanka in July, Peter Arbenz, the Swiss delegate for refugees, decided against deporting to that country Tamils denied political asylum in Switzerland in view of the uncertain situation in their homeland.

In 1987, 30,195 permanently resettled refugees were living in Switzerland. Roughly half of that number were from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Most of the others were from South, Southwest, and Southeast Asia.

Turkey

Turkey continued to play reluctant host to more than a half million Iranians and saw a major fresh influx of Kurdish refugees from Iraq as the Iran-Iraq war appeared to grind to a halt.

About 60,000 Kurds entered Turkey in the weeks following the August 20 ceasefire. They fled a major Iraqi offensive against Kurdish strongholds in the northern part of Iraq. Some estimates of the number of refugees ranged as high as 150,000, but the Turkish Prime Minister gave the 60,000 figure on August 31. Others are believed to have spontaneously moved into Iran after having initially crossed the Turkish border. A UNHCR mission to the camps on September 9–18 recorded 51,198 refugees in five camps. Smaller pockets of refugees were also reported along the frontier region.

The Turkish welcome of the refugees was a quick reversal of an initial response in August to close the border with Iraq. Up until this time, Turkey and Iraq had agreed on a policy allowing each country the right of "hot pursuit" against Kurdish rebels fleeing into the territory of the other. In this case, however, the rebel *Peshmargas* were willing to surrender their arms to the Turkish authorities in return for protection. Some cases of cross border shooting by Iraqi forces and Turkish border guards were reported.

However, Turkey showed a certain uneasiness about the new development. Turkey has strained relations with its own Kurdish minority. Some 8–10 million people out of a total population of 50 million, the Kurds are officially permitted to be called only "mountain Turks" and legally prohibited from most forms of cultural expression. In addition, Turkey has maintained a delicate balance with both Iran and Iraq during the course of the Gulf War, and has acted as a conduit and buyer for Iraqi oil.

Turkey's accession to the 1951 UN refugee *Convention* carries a geographic limitation recognizing as refugees only those who flee from Europe. Thus, both Iraqi and Iranian refugees are excluded from consideration.

Although it allowed a UNHCR mission to visit the camps, Turkey did not invite UNHCR to help provide assistance and protection. The Turkish government also declined to designate the Iraqi Kurds as official *refugees*; the tent constructions housing them as *camps*; or what was being offered as *asylum*.

Despite this apparent ambivalence, the Turkish authorities quickly and efficiently set up the camps a safe distance from the border, and provided medical care, food, water supplies, and even telephone lines. Most were sheltered in light-weight tents, which became of growing concern as the frigid winter weather approached. The authorities interviewed the refugees about their preferences for third-country resettlement or repatriation to Iraq. A Turkish press report also indicated that the refugees were being interviewed to identify "separatist terrorists" among them, and other unconfirmed reports said that about 100 had been arrested as suspected Turkish Kurdish rebels infiltrating with the refugee flow. About 2,000 reportedly expressed an interest in third-country resettlement, all of whom specified countries in the West (879 listed the Netherlands; none specified the United States).

Some refugees who initially expressed a willingness to return to Iraq later changed their minds, but were forced onto buses bound for Iraq anyway, according to an Amnesty International delegation that interviewed them.

Although most of the Iraqi Kurds who transferred to Iran did so voluntarily, in early September, about 2,000 were reportedly loaded onto trucks and transported to Iran against their will.

On September 9, USCR wrote letters to the Turkish authorities and issued a press release citing reports that Iraqi Kurdish refugees were transferred to Iran against their will. In a letter to the Turkish Prime Minister, USCR said, "Although Turkey is a signatory to the UN *Convention Relating to Refugees*, we are aware that your government has a geographic reservation recognizing only as refugees those who flee from Europe. The reality, however, is that people with well-founded fears of persecution from Iraq—and from Iran, as well—are seeking sanctuary in Turkey. They *are* refugees, whether or not your government has designated them as such. Therefore, they should not be moved against their will, especially across national borders where their lives and freedom would be put in jeopardy."

The Turkish government responded to USCR on September 27, saying that "no Iraqi refugees have been expelled from Turkey for any reason," and that the policy not to expel them against their will was unequivocally stated by Prime Minister Turgut Ozal. The government indicated that a team from the International Committee of the Red Cross monitored the voluntary repatriation of about a thousand Kurds, and that another 2,000 had gone to Iran voluntarily. The letter said that the Iraqi refugees were being provided with all necessary assistance, and asked that USCR "share your concern for the refugees with your colleagues in the United States and elsewhere to press their respective governments to help Turkey in dealing with this sudden refugee influx and to provide refugee visas for these people. All responsible governments have a moral obligation to shoulder the fair share of the work to assist refugees."

In October, another caravan carrying about 3,000 Kurdish refugees was reportedly stopped at the Iranian border, and had to return to the Uzunsirt camp in Yuksekova. Also in October, the ICRC declined to participate in further repatriation of Kurdish refugees to Iraq, reportedly indicating that their safety could not be guaranteed.

The lack of resettlement opportunities in the West also seemed to be an inhibiting factor in Turkish receptivity toward Iranian refugees. Although more than a half million Iranians live in Turkey, about half of whom are believed to fear persecution in Iran, only about 1,000 Iranian refugees per year have been resettled from Turkey to third countries in the last three years.

While the number of UNHCR-registered refugees stood at 2,200, and the number of pending requests at 3,260, at the end of 1987, the overwhelming majority of Iranians in Turkey do not register as refugees. Those with valid passports are in almost all cases required to remain as "tourists" and to renew their visas every three months by exiting and reentering at a border crossing (usually Bulgaria). This process continues until the passport expires (as long as three years). "Tourists" are not permitted to work.

Many Iranians crossing into Turkey who are most likely to be refugees are those who entered without passports or with fraudulent ones because they feared presenting themselves to the Iranian authorities, whom they thought would persecute them. Because of the risks of being returned to Iran, many, indeed, probably most, have chosen not to present themselves to the Turkish authorities at all. Included among these undocumented Iranians are large numbers of single young men of draft age. Large numbers of undocumented Iranians are believed to have been expelled by Turkish border authorities to Iran.

Undocumented Iranian asylum seekers who manage to present themselves to the UNHCR office in Ankara are sent back to the border area, where they are screened for entry by the Turkish police. Their names are kept on file by UNHCR, but they are not given interviews until passing the screening hurdle. There appears to be little oversight of this procedure, and no appeal of negative decisions. Hundreds of asylum seekers are believed to have been returned to Iran before being permitted to present their asylum claims to UNHCR. Other asylum seekers have reported extortion by Turkish border police with threats to turn them over to the Iranian authorities unless they pay bribes.

Cases have also come to the attention of USCR of UNHCR-registered refugees who have been forcibly returned to Iran, including one doctor, returned to Iran on February 1, despite having an offer for resettlement in Canada.

On August 17, USCR wrote to the Turkish government expressing concern about reports of *refoulement* of refugees to Iran. "We respectfully urge your government to instruct Turkish security forces in the border region to refer asylum seekers to competent officials of your government and access to officials of the UNHCR," said the letter. USCR also requested that the Turkish government "clearly state that no refugees with a well-founded fear of persecution will be returned to Iran regardless of the way in which they entered Turkey." No reply was received.

USCR has received several unconfirmed reports of returned refugees being arrested or executed upon return to Iran. In October, two Iranian diplomats were expelled from Turkey after having been caught trying to smuggle a gagged and bound Iranian dissident back into Iran in the trunk of their car.

United Kingdom

As is the case in other European countries, asylum policy in the United Kingdom has grown increasingly restrictive in recent years. In March 1987, the government introduced the Carriers Liability Act, which imposes heavy fines on shipping and airline companies that provide passage to people without proper travel-

ing papers. The act had an immediate impact in substantially reducing the number of asylum applicants arriving at ports of entry into the United Kingdom.

At the end of June 1988, there were 7,840 people waiting for a ruling on their applications. Kurds from Turkey surpassed Sri Lankan Tamils as the largest group seeking asylum in Britain in 1988. Of the estimated 10,000 Kurds in Britain, about 70 percent still await a determination on their status. There were significant increases in Ugandan and Pakistani asylum applications as well.

British authorities now grant refugee status to only 13 percent of asylum applicants, but rely increasingly on another humanitarian status known as "exceptional leave to remain" (ELR), which is renewable after one year. In 1987, only 378 people were given refugee status while 1,891 were granted ELR.

New legislation requires those with ELR status to wait seven years to apply for residence permits, where they previously only had to wait four. Additionally, those wishing to bring other family members with them to the UK must wait four years to do so.

A new immigration act, effective as of August 1, 1988, restricts the appeals process for asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected. In the past, British courts have been able to grant leave to remain under "compassionate circumstances" to those deemed to be in danger if forced to return to their country. Now, however, such cases are no longer in the courts' jurisdiction, making deportations more commonplace. The act also denies work authorization while asylum claims are pending.

Deportation of those denied refugee or ELR status continues under the direction of the British authorities. Despite the uncertain situation in Sri Lanka, some 50 Tamils were forced to leave the United Kingdom for their country during the summer of 1988.

A particularly disturbing incident occurred in April 1988 involving the deportation to Turkey of a rejected Iranian asylum applicant. Having received no assurance that the Turkish authorities would not send him back to Iran, the man slashed his wrists on the airplane. The wound did not prove fatal, however, and only served to delay the man's deportation.

In the last 13 years, Great Britain has taken in over 20,000 Vietnamese refugees, although the acceptance rate has dropped markedly in recent years. In 1988, the government resettled only about 250 Vietnamese refugees, although it pledged to double that amount in 1989.

UN Member States: Signatories and Non-Signatories to the UN Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees

Listed below are governments that belong to the United Nations, according to whether or not they have signed the 1951 UN *Convention* and/or the 1967 *Protocol* relating to refugees. Those nations in BOLD type *have signed* one or both. Those in regular type *have not* signed either.

Afghanistan, Albania, ***Algeria***, ***Angola***, **Antigua and Barbuda**, ***Argentina***, ***Australia***, ***Austria***, **Bahamas**, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, ***Belgium***, Belize, ***Benin***, Bhutan, ***Bolivia***, ***Botswana***, ***Brazil***, Brunei, Bulgaria, ***Burkina Faso***, Burma, ***Burundi***, Byelorussia, Cambodia (Kampuchea), ***Cameroon***, ***Canada***, ***Cape Verde+***, ***Central African Republic***, ***Chad***, ***Chile***, ***China***, ***Colombia***, Comoros, ***Congo***, ***Costa Rica***, Cuba, ***Cyprus***, Czechoslovakia, ***Denmark***, ***Djibouti***, Dominica, ***Dominican Republic***, ***Ecuador***, ***Egypt***, ***El Salvador***, ***Ethiopia***, ***Equatorial Guinea***, ***Fiji***, ***Finland***, ***France***, ***Gabon***, ***Gambia***, East Germany (GDR), ***West Germany (FRG)***, ***Ghana***, ***Greece***, ***Grenada***, ***Guatemala***, ***Guinea***, ***Guinea-Bissau***, Guyana, ***Haiti***, Honduras, Hungary, ***Iceland***, India, Indonesia, ***Iran***, Iraq, ***Ireland***, ***Israel***, ***Italy***, ***Ivory Coast***, ***Jamaica***, ***Japan***, Jordan, ***Kenya***, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, ***Lesotho***, ***Liberia***, Libya, ***Luxembourg***, ***Madagascar****, ***Malawi***, Malaysia, Maldives, ***Mali***, ***Malta***, ***Mauritania***, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, ***Monaco****, ***Morocco***, ***Mozambique****, Nepal, ***Netherlands***, ***New Zealand***, Nicaragua, ***Niger***, ***Nigeria***, ***Norway***, Oman, Pakistan, ***Panama***, ***Papua New Guinea***, ***Paraguay***, ***Peru***, ***Philippines***, Poland, ***Portugal***, Qatar, Romania, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, ***Samoa****, ***Western Samoa****, Saudi Arabia, ***Sao Tome and Principe***, ***Senegal***, ***Seychelles***, ***Sierra Leone***, Singapore, Solomon Islands, ***Somalia***, South Africa, ***Spain***, Sri Lanka, ***Sudan***, ***Suriname***, ***Swaziland+***, ***Sweden***, Syria, ***Tanzania***, Thailand, ***Togo***, Trinidad and Tobago, ***Tunisia***, ***Turkey***, ***Tuvalu***, ***Uganda***, Ukraine, USSR, United Arab Emirates, ***United Kingdom***, ***Uruguay***, ***United States+***, Vanuatu, Vietnam, ***Venezuela+***, ***North Yemen (YAR)***, South Yemen (PDRY), ***Yugoslavia***, ***Zaire***, ***Zambia***, ***Zimbabwe***.

* Signatories to the *Convention* only.
\+ Signatories to the *Protocol* only.

Note: Although not UN members, the following countries have also signed the UN *Convention* and *Protocol:* Holy See, Liechtenstein, Switzerland.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Belize

Belize, with only 170,000 citizens, is the only English-speaking country in the Central American mainland. The number of registered refugees in Belize is small—some 4,100—but there are 25,000–40,000 other undocumented aliens, mainly Spanish-speaking Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Salvadorans, whose presence poses serious social and economic problems for this tiny nation.

Since 1986, the government has been more active in identifying and deporting aliens who may have arrived in Belize with a mixture of economic and security motives. In 1987, registration of refugees was suspended and a commission was established to propose immigration reforms. In 1988, refugee registration resumed, and 1,444 asylum seekers were registered by the end of the year. Belize is not a signatory to the UN *Convention* or *Protocol* on refugees. Although registered refugees do not receive any government assistance specifically for refugees, they are entitled to receive all services—such as health and education—available to Belize nationals.

About half of those regarded as illegal immigrants by the government of Belize are thought to be Guatemalans. As the government of Guatemala has not recognized Belize's independence—and has laid claim to a sizable portion of Belize's territory—the presence of large numbers of Guatemalans troubles the authorities.

Chile

In September, Chile's military ruler, President Augusto Pinochet, declared that all remaining Chileans abroad—including some 400–500 former political associates of Salvador Allende, who was ousted by Pinochet in a bloody 1973 coup—could now return to Chile. Although most Chilean refugees had previously been told they could return, this last group—many of whom were forced into exile by the Pinochet regime—had been excluded from earlier amnesties.

Within 24 hours of the ban's lifting, Salvador Allende's daughter, Isabel Allende, returned from Mexico. She was followed three weeks later by the late president's widow, Hortensia Bussi de Allende. More than 600 other exiles were believed to have returned during the year. The decision to allow the exiles' return was seen as an attempt by Pinochet to improve his image prior to a plebiscite he called to seek endorsement for another eight years in power. In the October 5 plebiscite, Chileans rejected Pinochet, who accepted the defeat and reaffirmed that he would end military rule and step down at the end of his present term.

As many as one million Chileans live outside their country, in Argentina, Europe, North America, and elsewhere, though only a small number of these have sought official refugee status. In Brazil, between December 1987 and January 1988, a group of 28 Chilean refugees occupied the UNHCR office and demanded to be resettled in a third country, claiming that they were not safe in Brazil.

A young Nicaraguan refugee. UNHCR

Costa Rica

Costa Rica has a long history of offering asylum to refugees. Despite this tradition, in recent years many Costa Ricans have complained about the large number of refugees and undocumented aliens now in the country. Although the number of registered refugees is only 38,700, there may be between 100,000 and 250,000 unregistered aliens—almost all of them Nicaraguans—in the country. Many of this latter group are seasonal agricultural workers who previously returned to Nicaragua each year, but who now remain in Costa Rica due

to security problems and economic hardship in their own country.

Of the 38,700 official refugees (including 29,700 Nicaraguans, 6,200 Salvadorans, and 2,500 Cubans), the large majority live in the capital, San Jose, while some 7,400 reside in six UNHCR-assisted rural settlements. UNHCR and the government of Costa Rica have initiated steps to improve the process for registering refugees, issue work permits to those who are registered, and help them to attain self-sufficiency. The European Economic Community and Dutch government are both sponsoring local integration projects that could provide jobs and housing for thousands of refugees and Costa Ricans. It is anticipated that to the degree that these programs are successful, many of those who are currently undocumented aliens may seek registration as refugees.

Major influxes of Nicaraguans into Costa Rica began in the late 1970s, as some 6,000 civilian refugees fled from the Somoza regime. After the overthrow of Somoza in mid-1979, these refugees returned home only to be succeeded by growing numbers of other Nicaraguans—initially those opposed to the Sandinista regime, followed by many fleeing the growing conflict between the government and the anti-Sandinista contra forces. Most recently, Nicaraguan refugees have often been young men—and their families—fleeing conscription by either side in the conflict.

In December 1988, the Costa Rican government was considering measures that would give border authorities greater discretion in turning away potential asylum seekers. This followed influxes of Nicaraguans in the wake of the destruction caused by Hurricane Joan.

Cuba

There are approximately 2,000 Haitian refugees living in Cuba, and a few individuals from various Latin American countries who have sought asylum there. Since 1959, more than one million Cubans have left their country and sought asylum abroad, mostly in the United States. Cubans in the United States, Europe, and many Latin American countries are for the most part socially and economically integrated. Nevertheless, a small number, particularly those living in Panama, Peru, and Spain, have not had the same opportunities to integrate locally.

In September, 687 Cubans refugees who were living in Panama and Costa Rica were resettled in the United States, followed in December by another 650 who arrived from Spain. They were the first of several thousand Cubans who will be resettled in the United States under an agreement between the U.S. government and the Cuban-American National Foundation, a private agency that is paying all the costs of resettling the refugees.

Under a separate agreement, worked out in late 1987 between Washington and Havana under the auspices of the United States Catholic Conference, former Cuban political prisoners have also been allowed to resettle in the United States. As of July, about 1,000 (out of an anticipated 3,000) former political prisoners had arrived in the United States.

This agreement also provided for Cuba to accept the return of a number of Cubans who had left the country as part of the Mariel boatlift of 1980 and who were under detention in the United States (some have been in detention since their arrival because of their criminal records in Cuba; others have been arrested for crimes committed in the U.S.). In December, the United States deported five Cuban detainees, the first of about 2,500 who may eventually be deported to Cuba.

Cubans attempting to leave the country without authorization are subject to up to three-years' imprisonment. The Cuban government said that 140 persons were convicted of illegal departure attempts in 1988.

El Salvador

El Salvador is a small nation with a population of only 5.2 million people. Yet it has produced more than one million refugees, who are scattered throughout Central and North America, as well as hundreds of thousands of persons displaced within El Salvador.

During 1988, the repatriation of Salvadoran refugees from Honduras continued. An estimated 2,000 Salvadorans, mostly from Mesa Grande refugee camp in Honduras, returned to their homes during the year, joining some 5,850 who repatriated during 1987. The refugees are returning to a precarious situation. The Salvadoran military, which is engaged in a civil war that has cost more than 60,000 lives during its eight-year history, is suspicious of the refugees, accusing them of being supporters of the Farabundo Marti Liberation Front (FMLN). The military has been critical of the decision to allow the refugees to return and to permit them to settle in their old villages, which are located in areas controlled by FMLN insurgents. UNHCR tries to offer food and medical aid to the returnees—primarily through the Catholic Church—but the military has often prevented assistance from reaching them by refusing to allow trucks carrying aid to reach the returnees' villages.

The U.S. State Department's human rights report charged that the FMLN controls the returnee villages, "just as they controlled the refugee camps" in Honduras. The refugees comply, said the report, "because the guerrillas regularly back up their threats by assassinating those who fail to cooperate." The report did not include documentation of such assassinations.

Amnesty International issued a report on resurgent death squad activity in 1988, saying that the victims included returned refugees and displaced persons, although only one specific case was mentioned, which involved a returnee who "disappeared" following his return from Honduras in January 1987. During the first three months of 1988 alone, death squad killings were said to equal the total for 1987. The death squads—often linked with the Salvadoran army and security forces—have targeted all sectors of Salvadoran society, including peasants, church workers, human rights activists, and jurors.

The civil war—the cause of much of the civilian displacement in El Salvador—continues to rage, and many depopulated areas remain too dangerous for habitation due to the fighting. However, conscious efforts to repopulate formerly depopulated areas appeared to reduce the number of internally displaced persons. Making an accurate estimate of the number of displaced due to civil strife was complicated, however, by the displacement of 250,000 by a 1986 hurricane, many of whom remained homeless in 1988.

Further complicating an estimate of the number of internally displaced is the fact that many do not register with the government, which generally considers those displaced by the war to be "subversives," and keeps them under surveillance. Some 130,000 of the internally displaced settled in government-run refugee camps, while others went to church-run camps, squatters' camps, or stayed with friends or relatives.

These refugees are repatriating from Honduras to El Salvador. A million Salvadorans remain in exile, as civil unrest continues. UNHCR

In January, displaced persons at one church-run camp, the San Jose Calle Real camp near San Salvador, were shot at by uniformed soldiers, who wounded one of the camp's residents. Foreign and Salvadoran relief workers in the camp were subsequently harassed and threatened with death if they did not stop their work, according to Amnesty International.

By the end of 1988, most of the non-government camps had closed. Only 27 displaced people remained at the Calle Real camp, which sheltered more than 500 in 1987. Military harassment of the camps, and the inability of relief workers to continue providing assistance, are cited as the reasons for the closures.

El Salvador hosts a small population of refugees from neighboring countries, mainly Nicaragua. Some 400 registered refugees receive UNHCR assistance, while an estimated 1,500 unregistered Nicaraguans are also living in El Salvador.

French Guiana

Although not much about the Surinamese refugee situation in French Guiana actually changed last year, several related developments could affect the refugees in the coming year.

The refugees are Maroons, descendants of African slaves who have mostly lived in the jungles of Suriname and who fled a civil war there beginning in 1986. Approximately 10,000 were in camps in French Guiana in 1988, a year when refugee arrivals in that country and voluntary repatriates to Suriname were numerically insignificant. Also, there were no reports of forced refugee repatriations by French authorities who, technically speaking, still failed to recognize the Maroons as refugees, or by local French Guyanese officials.

One significant development in 1988 that could affect the refugees' future was an August agreement by Suriname, French Guiana, and UNHCR to explore the chances of a voluntary repatriation program. Several months later, a top Surinamese official reportedly visited French Guiana to encourage refugees to repatriate, and he proposed a small pilot return program as the first step in that regard. Meanwhile, UNHCR was reportedly planning to station a representative in French Guiana in 1989 to assist refugees interested in voluntarily returning to Suriname.

Throughout 1988, observers from sev-

eral different sides of the issue emphasized to USCR that Surinamese refugee interest in repatriation remained very weak because Lt. Col Desi Bouterse, the former ruler of Suriname, remained in control of the Surinamese military. The refugees are said to fear Bouterse since they believe he remains dangerously antagonistic toward Maroons over the continuing insurgency that began against him, contributed to his ouster, and is led by a Maroon, Ronnie Brunswijk. Though the Surinamese government changed hands in January—after seven years of military control, the National Assembly elected a civilian president—Bouterse's influence is still considered to be very strong. An August 1988 attack by his forces against insurgents broke down peace talks, and alleged massacres of Maroons and political opponents of Bouterse remain uninvestigated by the new government.

Meanwhile, military forces in 1988 continued to seal off much of Suriname where sources described Maroon villages as suffering from shortages in medical supplies and other basics. Some observers believe that conditions in those areas have become so unattended and/or damaged during the course of the civil war that it will be very costly to repatriate refugees back to them should any choose to return to Suriname.

Guatemala

In Guatemala, the year began—and ended—with reports of greatly increased human rights abuses.

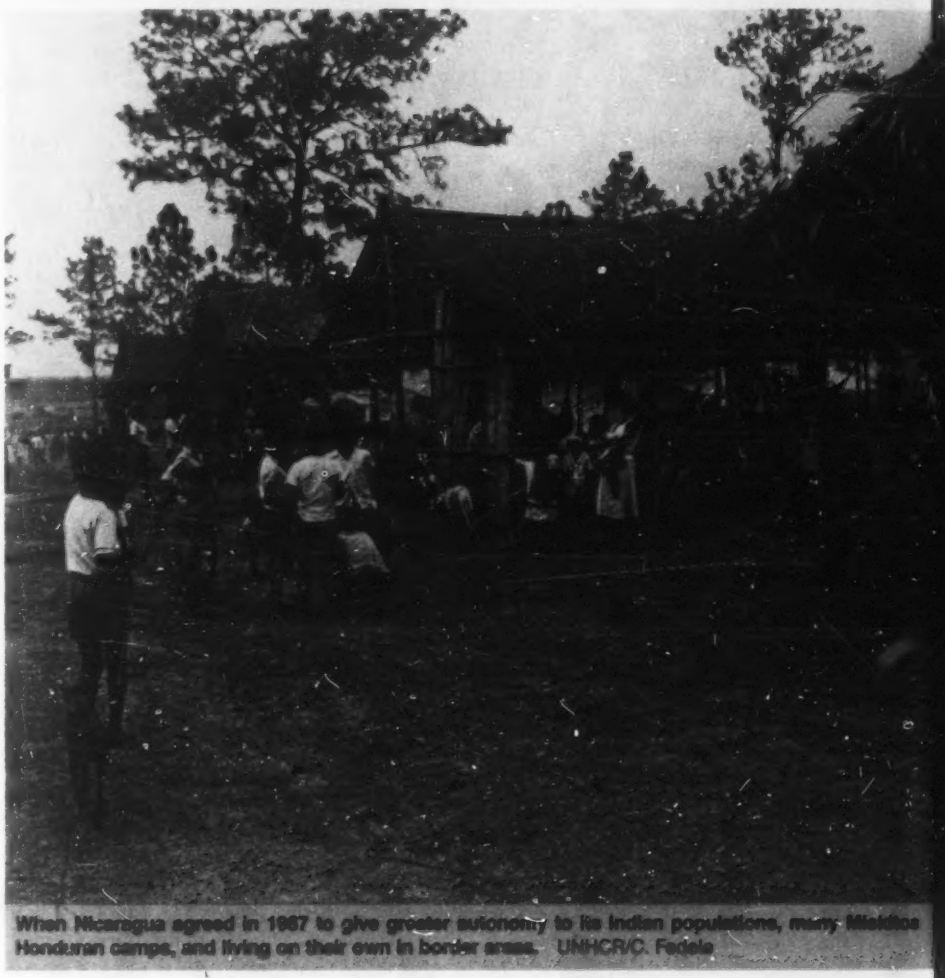
Following the 1986 inauguration of Guatemala's first civilian president in almost two decades, Vinicio Cerezo, there was a decrease in political murders, disappearances, and other human rights abuses—only 33 political killings were reported during President Cerezo's first 10 months in office. By contrast, during just three months in mid-1988, 203 killings were reported, indicating reduced civilian control over the military. During 16 years of military rule prior to the election of the civilian government, there were an estimated 100,000 killings and 40,000 disappearances.

For Guatemalan refugees in Mexico, the increase in political violence during 1988 raises concerns about how safe it would be for them to return to their homeland. Approximately 1,830 Guatemalans repatriated in the first nine months of 1988, joining 975 who went home in 1987. However, some 41,200 Guatemalans remain in refugee camps in Mexico, and an estimated 60,000 others are living in that country without documentation or refugee status.

In October 1987, the Guatemalan government held talks in Madrid with rebel leaders, but the talks broke down after only three days and sparked strong opposition to the president within the military. In April 1988, the government allowed a group of four prominent exiles to return to Guatemala for a visit, but the military arrested the four upon arrival and interrogated them for several hours before releasing them. The conflict between the civilian government and the military on these and other related issues led to an unsuccessful coup attempt by a group of army officers on May 11.

The military opposes large-scale refugee repatriations. They say that the refugees sympathize with the guerrillas and that their return could hinder the war effort. Refugees who repatriate are kept under close surveillance, and, in some cases, the military has sought to engage returnees in its counter-insurgency strategy.

A major factor in determining the extent of future repatriations could be land. Outside of a few areas, most returnees have been able to reclaim the land that they left behind. For some time, the military, which has a major role in the government agency created to assist returnees and displaced persons, had been redistributing refugees' lands to landless peasants from other areas of the country who are more sympathetic to the army. However, new Guatemalan government policies give original owners rights to their lands. Returnees are successfully reclaiming their land even in cases where it had



When Nicaragua agreed in 1987 to give greater autonomy to its Indian populations, many Miskitos Honduran camps, and living on their own in border areas. UNHCR/C. Fedele

been distributed to others. This could prove to be an incentive for more refugees to return in 1989.

Like other displaced Guatemalans, refugees who cannot reclaim their lands may have to move to army-supervised "model villages" created as part of an effort to establish greater military control in the northern highlands.

began to repatriate. Thousands remain in

The Guatemalan military's counter-insurgency campaign, which caused many Guatemalans to flee to neighboring countries in the early 1980s, also caused the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands. While many flocked to the capital and other towns (despite the absence of economic opportunities), tens of thousands sought refuge in the mountains surrounding their villages. Many of these were Indians from the northern highlands who had fled in the wake of the military's razing of entire villages and killing of civilian populations.

Since then, the army has sought to bring these displaced people under its control, either by offering them incentives to move into the model villages, or by capturing them and moving them by force. After several weeks of interrogation and reeducation, they are moved to one of the more than 30 army-controlled villages, where they are kept under close surveillance. The men are often forced to participate in the so-called Self-Defense Patrols. Although Guatemala's 1985 constitution states that no one should be forced to join the patrols, during 1988, some 600,000 Guatemalans were still participants, and the patrols remain an integral part of the army's continuing counter-insurgency campaign.

The model villages have failed to become self-sufficient, relying on relief from religious organizations, but during 1988, the army continued to round up displaced people from the mountains and settle them in the villages, its goal being to isolate the guerrillas in the mountains.

Guatemala hosts a small UNHCR-assisted refugee population of approximately 2,000 Nicaraguans and several hundred Salvadorans, most of whom live in the capital. An undetermined number of other Salvadorans and Nicaraguans—estimates range from thousands to tens of thousands—stay in Guatemala with no legal status.

Haiti

The people of the small Caribbean nation of Haiti, the poorest in the hemisphere, had four governments during 1988, but little relief from the persecution, civil violence, and harsh economic problems they have experienced for many years and which contribute to the continuing exodus from that country.

More than one million Haitians, about one sixth of the country's population, are estimated to live in exile. They have fled to many nations—including the United States (450,000), the Dominican Republic (250,000–500,000), Canada (45,000), France (15,000–30,000), the Bahamas (30,000), Venezuela (6,000), and other Caribbean nations (30,000)—but have been welcomed in few. While not all Haitian expatriates are refugees, many are. Endemic unemployment, high illiteracy, and serious malnutrition are compelling reasons for Haitian migration. However, Haiti also endured 30 years of dictatorship under the Duvalier family, followed by three years of continued violence and uncertainty since the end of the Duvalier rule. Many are believed to have fled due to fears of persecution, even if neighboring countries have chosen not to recognize their asylum claims.

The controversial election of a civilian president in mid-January did little to produce stability or reduce violence. In June, the civilian president was deposed by his military predecessor, one of two military coups in 1988.

The U.S. Coast Guard continues to interdict boats carrying potential Haitian asylum seekers to the United States. During 1988, 4,671 Haitians were stopped on the high seas and returned to Port-au-Prince. This brings to 18,250 the number of Haitians interdicted since the program began in October 1981. Of that number, only two-to-four persons have been brought ashore to pursue claims for political asylum. Haitians not caught in the interdiction program and who then applied for asylum in the United States had only a two-percent approval rate from June 1983 through September 1988.

It is not only the United States, however, which rejects Haitians' claims to refugee status. The Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, and French Guiana have all deported or encouraged the voluntary departure of thousands of Haitians in recent years.

Honduras

Twice during 1988, USCR communicated its concern regarding the treatment of refugees in Honduras to that country's government. In August, USCR urged a judicial investigation of two incidents in which Salvadoran refugees were allegedly killed by Honduran military personnel. The first incident was the fatal shooting, on April 23, of a 63-year-old refugee inside Colomoncagua camp. In the second incident, which took place on July 25, a 37-year-old male refugee was attacked inside the perimeter of Mesa Grande refugee camp by Honduran military personnel, then forced outside the camp, where he was shot at close range and killed. His skull was subsequently smashed. In October, USCR again wrote to the Honduran government, this time to express concern at reports that during a six-month period, up to 300 Nicaraguan asylum seekers had been forcibly returned to Nicaragua after they

had crossed the border into Honduras seeking asylum. According to the reports, the asylum seekers were expelled by officers at the Honduran immigration office in El Triunfo, a Honduran town two miles from the Nicaraguan border. The expelled Nicaraguans had to return across an area said to be riddled with land mines on both sides of the border.

Honduras is one of Central America's poorest countries, but hosts its largest refugee population. Besides the 37,000 registered refugees living in UNHCR-assisted camps, there are between 50,000 and 200,000 undocumented aliens, many of whom are refugees or in refugee-like circumstances. Most of them are from Nicaragua, some from El Salvador, and a smaller number from Guatemala.

Honduras also hosts the U.S.-backed "contra" rebel forces, which oppose Nicaragua's Sandinista government. Bordered by countries whose governments—both rightist and leftist—are engaged in prolonged civil wars, and concerned about the effects of having an insurgent military force operating out of its territory, the Honduran government's attitude towards refugees has continued to harden. The government sees refugees not only as a threat to its security and relations with its neighbors, but also as an added strain to its internal economic and political problems.

Honduras is not a signatory to the UN *Convention* and *Protocol* on refugees, but did, in 1987, sign a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR establishing a formal legal agreement regarding cooperation on behalf of refugees in the country. Nevertheless, there has been continuing international concern regarding the refugees' security. Incidents such as those in April, July, and October—by no means isolated and only the latest of numerous documented abuses—reinforce that international concern.

Salvadoran refugees began entering Honduras in 1980. Because they came from areas in El Salvador dominated by leftist guerrillas, they were immediately considered suspect by the Honduran military. In November 1981, the Honduran government decided to transfer refugees away from the border areas to Mesa Grande camp, about 21 miles inland, and forcibly relocated 11,000 of the refugees. Because of strong opposition from the refugees and some international organizations, however, about 9,000 refugees were allowed to remain in two border settlements—Colomoncagua and San Antonio. Also, an estimated 7,000 Salvadoran refugees chose to repatriate rather than relocate away from the border. Continued suspicions that the refugees were supporting guerrilla activities led to the Honduran government's sealing the camps and restricting the refugees' movements. The camps were subject to patrols and searches by the Honduran military, and there were numerous reports of abuses against the refugees by military personnel.

In October 1987, 4,313 refugees from Mesa Grande repatriated to El Salvador. During 1988, besides about 450 individual repatriations, there were also repatriations of large groups in August and November, with about 2,000 Salvadorans returning to their country. The repatriations were not without incident. In August, the convoy of vehicles carrying the refugees was held up at the border for two days when the Salvadoran authorities denied entry to an American religious delegation that, at the refugees' request, was accompanying the convoy to ensure that the refugees returned safely to their villages. The repatriation proceeded when the Americans agreed to remain behind.

At Colomoncagua, a closed camp patrolled by the Honduran military, relations among the refugees, the Honduran authorities, UNHCR, and the voluntary relief agencies working in the camps became strained almost to the breaking point. During 1988, the refugees—who have developed a rigid political organization within the camp—continued to protest abuses by the Honduran military and inaction by UNHCR. The relief agencies also became highly critical of UNHCR, at one point voicing their concerns in a paid advertisement in a local newspaper. In June, UNHCR took the unusual step of issuing a statement to the refugees at Colomoncagua—some of whom were planning a hunger strike—defending its role in the camp and its assistance to the refugees.

The State Department's human rights report charged that the Salvadoran guerrilla movement engages in forced recruitments and kidnappings of refugee youth from the camps, as well as other forms of coercion and intimidation to prevent voluntary repatriation. The U.S. government has continued to come under criticism by groups claiming that it encourages Honduran hostility towards the refugees.

Besides the tension that arises from remaining in a closed camp for many years, refugees at Colomoncagua continued to worry that the Honduran authorities would again try to move them farther away from the border.

Nicaraguans have traditionally benefited from a long-standing Honduran policy of offering sanctuary to all Nicaraguan refugees. They have also enjoyed much greater freedom of movement within Honduras than have Salvadoran refugees. During 1988, however, various factors contributed to an erosion of Honduran support for them.

The first major influx of Nicaraguans into Honduras was of Indians, mainly Miskitos and Sumos, who fled the Sandinista government's efforts to relocate them by force away from their traditional Coco River villages beginning in 1981. Additional influxes occurred in response to increasing conflict and polarization between the government and the Indians, and to military recruitment drives by both the Sandinistas and the contras.

With UNHCR assistance, Indian refugees were accommodated in more than 60 settlements away from the border, in the sparsely populated Mosquitia region of Honduras. Difficulties in maintaining a steady supply of commodities to these isolated communities, however, forced many refugees to scavenge for food and fuel on private property, creating tension with the local population. Thousands of Nicaraguan Indians who lived in the border areas did not choose to present themselves as refugees.

In 1987, the Nicaraguan government agreed to measures giving greater autonomy to its Indian populations. In May of that year, UNHCR began direct air flights (in addition to land routes) to carry Indians who wished to repatriate back to Nicaragua. Some 3,873 refugees, mostly Indians, repatriated to Nicaragua in 1987. During 1988, a further 7,900 Nicaraguans repatriated, although the returns decreased when peace talks between the Indian leadership and the Sandinista government broke down. Some 9,614 Nicaraguan Indians remain in UNHCR-administered camps in Honduras.

As Indian refugees were repatriating to Nicaragua in 1987 and 1988, Nicaraguan refugees of Spanish descent—Ladinos—were fleeing into

Honduras at increasing rates. Between 1986 and the end of 1987, the Ladino refugee population in Honduras nearly doubled (although some of these newly registered refugees may actually have been previously living in border areas without documentation). In 1988, 13,444 Ladino refugees were residing in UNHCR camps. Ladinos began fleeing to Nicaragua in small groups as early as 1982, about a year after the contra forces began their armed resistance to the Sandinista government. The flow continued at a moderate rate for the next several years, with some refugees moving into villages where UNHCR provided housing, and others—mainly those identified with the contra forces—remaining in the border areas. In early 1987, however, the flow of refugees increased substantially, apparently in response to a military recruitment drive by the Sandinista government.

Following the cut-off of U.S. military aid to the contras in early 1988 and a cease-fire agreement between the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and the contras, up to 80 percent of contra fighters withdrew from Nicaragua and returned to their bases in Honduras. The contras also ordered more than 2,000 of their civilian supporters in Nicaragua to abandon their homes and move to Honduras. The civilians had to trek 150 miles through mountainous terrain to reach Honduras. Thirteen persons died during the arduous month-long journey, 100 required hospitalization upon reaching Honduras, and 1,000 needed treatment for other medical problems.

The Honduran government is alarmed at the presence of the 11,000 armed contra rebels, and concerned about where they will go if additional U.S. support is not forthcoming. In August, Honduras restricted the recently returned rebels to the border areas and, in October, the Honduran Foreign Minister, in a speech before the UN General Assembly, called for the removal of the contras from Honduras and for an international peacekeeping force to patrol the borders with Nicaragua and El Salvador.

These Guatemalans are returning to their home country after years in Mexico. UNHCR/R. del Percio

These events have taken their toll on Nicaraguan refugees. In October, it was reported that during 1988 Honduran authorities had turned back up to 300 Nicaraguan asylum seekers at the border, some of whom were subsequently jailed in Nicaragua. The expulsions, in violation of the Honduran government's 1987 memorandum of understanding with UNHCR, reflected hardening Honduran attitudes towards not only the

contras, but towards Nicaraguan refugees as well.

In addition to the Salvadorans and Nicaraguans, there is also a small population of Guatemalan refugees who arrived in Honduras in 1981, part of a mass exodus of refugees fleeing political violence in their homeland. In 1987, 118 Guatemalans repatriated, leaving some 380 Guatemalan refugees in Honduras.

Mexico

The official refugee population in Mexico—some 40,500—consists mostly of rural Guatemalans who live in settlements in three states in southern Mexico. A small number of urban South and Central American refugees—including Argentineans, Chileans, Salvadorans, and Uruguayans who have been in Mexico for many years—reside in Mexico City. There are also at least 120,000 undocumented Salvadorans, who are considered to be *de facto* refugees.

Although Mexico is not a signatory to the UN *Convention* and *Protocol* on refugees, historically it had been liberal in its granting of asylum to the small number of individual Latin Americans who sought refuge there. However, with the onset of large-scale influxes of refugees in recent years, Mexico has applied differing treatment to the various groups of asylum seekers. For example, only the Guatemalans living in camps and individually recognized refugees in the large urban centers are considered refugees. A majority of Salvadorans are not, and while most are allowed to remain in Mexico, others may face deportation. In March, Mexican authorities stated that they would not expel Salvadoran political refugees who had not committed any crime. The statement came in response to a call from the Salvadoran government for Mexico to expel Salvadorans living Mexico, who the Salvadoran authorities claim are using Mexico as a training ground for guerrilla attacks in El Salvador.

The major group of Guatemalan refugees, mainly Indians from the highlands of Huehuetenango and El Quiche provinces near the Mexican border, entered Chiapas state in Mexico between 1981 and 1983. At that time, the Indian population of Guatemala was being subjected to a brutal campaign of violence by the Guatemalan military, which was engaged in a war against anti-government insurgents. Hundreds of thousands of Guatemalans fled their country, and more than 500,000 are believed to have been internally displaced.

The influx of Guatemalan refugees alarmed the Mexican authorities, who initially turned many of them back at the border. Following reports that some of those refused entry to Mexico were subsequently killed in Guatemala, international and domestic public opinion led the Mexican government to cease its policy of mass deportations.

Even in Mexico, though, the refugees were not always safe from incursions by the Guatemalan armed forces, who repeatedly attacked refugee camps near the border and killed a number of refugees and Mexican citizens. For this and other internal and external political reasons, in 1984 the Mexican government decided to transfer the refugees from Chiapas to rural settlements in the states of Campeche and Quintana Roo, on the Yucatan peninsula. The refugees were very reluctant to leave, as many of them had relatives and close cultural ties in Chiapas—which was once part of Guatemala—and wanted to remain near their homeland. Five large settlements were established in Yucatan to accommodate about 18,500 Guatemalans, but another 2',000 refugees resisted the Mexican government's sometimes heavy-handed efforts to relocate them. During 1988, COMAR (Comision Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados) continued to distribute UNHCR assistance to some 22,100 Guatemalan refugees throughout Chiapas. Beyond assistance, the Mexican authorities have not encouraged the integration of the refugees still in Chiapas into that state's troubled economy. However, the refugees resettled in Campeche and Quintana Roo, although still in receipt of UNHCR assistance, have been allotted small plots of land to cultivate and have achieved levels of subsistence nearly comparable to those of the local population.

With the inauguration of a civilian president in Guatemala in 1986, the Mexican government hoped that the refugees would soon return home. Indeed, within a few months of taking office, Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo told refugees in Mexico that within six months conditions would be ripe for their return. However, since 1986, only 3,357 Guatemalans have repatriated, 1,830 of those during 1988. The refugees have feared that the Guatemalan military is not under Cerezo's control, and thus their safety cannot be guaranteed if they return.

Nicaragua

Approximately 1,500 of the estimated 7,600 refugees living in Nicaragua continued to receive UNHCR assistance during 1988. The remainder have been successfully integrated into the local economy, either through participation in the government's rural agricultural cooperative system or employment in urban centers. More than 95 percent of the refugees are Salvadorans who fled political violence in El Salvador in the early 1980s; the remainder are Guatemalans. Some 600 Salvadorans repatriated to El Salvador from Nicaragua in 1988.

Since 1987, Nicaraguan refugees—mostly Miskito and Sumo Indians—have been repatriating from Honduras. The refugees began returning after the Nicaraguan government acknowledged that its past policies toward this group were inappropriate and moved toward granting considerable autonomy to the region they have traditionally inhabited. Direct flights between Honduras and Nicaragua were established by UNHCR in 1987 to facilitate the refugees' return.

In January 1988, a group of prominent Indian refugee leaders returned to Nicaragua for talks with Nicaragua's Sandinista government. During 1988, nearly 7,900 Nicaraguans returned from Honduras, though most repatriations occurred before the talks broke down.

The Nicaraguan government also engaged in peace talks with leaders of the National Resistance (contras) that led to a cease-fire beginning in March. Nevertheless, many Nicaraguans continued to flee the country, not only to Honduras, but also to other countries in Central America and to the United States. Reports from Miami, which has a Nicaraguan population of more than 100,000, indicate that during 1988 the number of Nicaraguan arrivals nearly tripled, from 300 a week early in the year to 800 a week by November.

MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

While almost six million refugees have left Afghanistan seeking shelter in Pakistan and Iran, another two million are estimated to be displaced within the country's borders as a result of the war.

Soviet and Afghan army bombings and strafings, as well as reprisal massacres against villages supporting the *Mujahedin* resistance, have accounted for much of the displacement of civilians. More than half of the 22,000 villages that existed before the war have been destroyed, and about a quarter of the remaining villages have been damaged.

While some displaced persons continued to gravitate to Kabul, whose population has doubled to at least 1.5 million since 1978, other towns and cities have been reduced to ruins and their inhabitants forced into the relative safety of mountainous rural areas.

Afghanistan's second largest city, Qandahar, shows the reverse of the Kabul phenomenon. Its pre-war population of 180,000 has been reduced to as few as 50,000, and much of the city has been reduced to rubble.

Thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons have already returned spontaneously to the sites of their former villages in previously depopulated areas not under government control. Most commonly, men have returned to assess conditions, to clear fields, repair homes, and prepare the way for their families to return. In the Panjsher Valley, northeast of Kabul, returning refugees from Pakistan and displaced persons from Kabul have begun the slow process of reconstruction.

Reputable observers discount the government's claim, however, that 160,000 refugees have responded to the call of Najibullah, the head of the Kabul regime, for refugee repatriation under the guise of "national reconciliation." The government says that it has built 300 centers to accommodate returnees, including large "peace guest houses" along the main routes from Pakistan and Iran that will be able to hold more than 10,000 people at a time. The Kabul government also charges that both Iran and Pakistan, as well as "armed extremists," have prevented refugees from returning and, in September, called for an international commission to investigate its allegations that refugees were "subjected to coercion even killing" to prevent their return.

The millions of landmines and boobytraps scattered throughout the country are a more obvious obstacle to repatriation. After Soviet and Afghan army forces withdrew from Barikowt in April, more than 30 returning refugees were killed by landmines.

Other refugees continue to leave Afghanistan, perhaps offsetting the number of returnees. Deliberate attacks on unarmed groups of refugees have been reported. In May, USCR wrote to Najibullah urging him to take decisive action to prevent such attacks from occurring, to order an independent investigation into these reports, and to bring to justice those who participated in massacres of unarmed would-be refugees. The government did not respond.

Bangladesh

A major natural disaster—a cyclone and flooding—left homeless about 25 million people, one-third of Bangladesh's total population in September. Millions of people were living in temporary shelters following the flooding.

Despite the justifiable preoccupation with meeting the basic survival needs of its own citizens, the situations of other people displaced for political, ethnic, and religious reasons continued unresolved.

About 258,000 Urdu-speaking Muslims, known as Bihari Muslims or "stranded Pakistanis,"—who sided with Pakistan when Bangladesh seceded in 1971—remained in 23 refugee camps. The living conditions in the camps reportedly continued to be unsanitary and impoverished. In July, fire gutted much of the Mirpur camp, leaving 17,000 refugees homeless again.

In July, an agreement was signed in Pakistan for the repatriation of the Biharis. Pakistan's agreement was contingent on outside funding for transportation and resettlement, which a Saudi Arabian-based welfare society agreed to raise. UNHCR also began a skills survey in 1988 in order to start a program to build their self-reliance.

In June, Islam was declared the state religion of Bangladesh. Bangladeshi opposition political leaders charged that tens of thousands of non-Muslims fled to India in the weeks following the announcement. The reports could not be independently confirmed. The declaration appeared to create another obstacle to the voluntary repatriation of the 50,000 non-Muslim refugees from the Chittagong Hill Tracts who are currently staying in India, though 1,500 were reported to have returned during the course of the year. An undetermined number of persons belonging to the Chakma, Marma (Mogh), Tippera, and other tribes have been internally displaced as a result of fighting that began thirteen years ago.

The government was reportedly conducting a census of a group of Muslim refugees from Burma known as Rohingas. Estimated at about 15,000 families, there was no apparent increase in their numbers following unrest in Burma in 1988. Some Rohingas reportedly expressed the fear that the census could mean that they might be forcibly repatriated. As many as 300,000 Rohingas entered Bangladesh in 1978, saying that they were fleeing religious persecution in predominantly Buddhist Burma. Most of them repatriated the following year.

India

India, a mosaic of diverse religious and ethnic groups, had to contend not only with a variety of internal conflicts in 1988 pitting its own citizens against each other, but also with refugee groups from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, China, Burma, Afghanistan, and Iran.

More than 37,000 Tamil refugees returned to Sri Lanka during the year. An estimated 135,000 Tamil refugees arrived in India's Tamil Nadu state between 1983 and 1987. Their expedited repatriation was part of a peace accord signed in July 1987 between Sri Lanka and India. Although Sri Lanka has invited UNHCR to assist in the repatriation effort, India has declined to permit UNHCR involvement with Tamil refugees on its soil.

In early April, a local Indian press report cited the director of refugee rehabilitation in Tamil Nadu as saying that he hoped to send all Sri Lankan refugees back within six months. He reportedly said that no refugees repatri-

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Prospects for Repatriation of Afghan Refugees

Barnett R. Rubin

The four agreements on Afghanistan signed in Geneva on April 14, 1988, created an institutional framework within which voluntary repatriation of between 5 and 6 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran could occur. By the end of 1988, however, the implementation of the accords was not yet complete, and the conditions for refugee repatriation did not yet exist. Successful repatriation will depend above all on the formation of a new broad-based government in Afghanistan that will enjoy the confidence of the refugees and end the civil war, which will otherwise continue after the Soviet withdrawal.

One of the four agreements specifically deals with the repatriation of refugees from Pakistan. (As Iran did not participate in the talks, the agreements did not explicitly provide for repatriation of refugees from Iran, but they are expected to be included in whatever resettlement program is developed for those in Pakistan.) It provides for the free and voluntary return of all refugees and their equal rights and responsibilities in the Republic of Afghanistan. Press leaks about the content of the accords had indicated that they would include provision for an amnesty, but there is no explicit mention of this in the accord.

Under the accord, the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan are to set up "mixed commissions" to establish frontier crossing points, registration, and other modalities. Finally, according to Article VI:

> At the request of the Governments concerned, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will cooperate and provide assistance in the process of voluntary repatriation of refugees in accordance with the present Agreement. Special agreements may be concluded for this purpose between UNHCR and (the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan).

These arrangements are initially to stay in effect for 18 months (until November 15, 1989), after which they may be renewed or modified.

The agreements could not establish any time framework for the implementation of refugee repatriation, as the decision to return or not was left to the refugees themselves. Most of the refugees are from rural areas, and they fled because bombing, mines, and repeated attacks on their agricultural livelihood by Soviet and Afghan government troops had made it difficult or impossible for them to survive. Their condition as refugees varies greatly, from those who have integrated well into the local economy to the greater number, especially the women, who are isolated, idle, and just surviving from day to day. Despite their relative material security, at least

in Pakistan, the vast majority of refugees say that they wish to go back, but only when they are sure of their safety and economic security upon return.

The first obstacle is political. The agreements provided for a reduction in external involvement in Afghanistan—the Soviets were to pull out all their troops by February 15, 1989, while Pakistan and the United States were to cease aid to the Afghan *Mujahedin*—but they did not deal explicitly with the nature of the government in Kabul. Nevertheless, the negotiators and most observers recognize that the change in the balance of forces caused by the external disengagement will necessarily lead to some change in the government.

There are three formal proposals for transforming the government in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union and the Kabul regime have proposed a "Government of National Reconciliation," which would consist of a coalition of the PDPA, nonparty figures, supporters of the exiled former king, Zaher Shah (and perhaps the ex-king himself), tribal and religious leaders, resistance commanders, and leaders of any of the exile political groups who care to join. The PDPA and the Soviets hope to coopt resistance commanders by offering to recognize their control of the localities where they operate and isolate the more extreme Islamic fundamentalists. In the two years since the PDPA officially proclaimed the policy on December 31, 1986, however, not a single major resistance commander or political leader has offered to cooperate with the government, and Zaher Shah has also refused to participate in a PDPA-led government. Without participation by the resistance or the ex-king, the refugees and resistance fighters will continue to mistrust and oppose the government, the civil war will continue, and the refugees will not return.

The seven exiled resistance parties in Peshawar, Pakistan, (organized into the Islamic Unity of Afghan *Mujahedin*) have proposed an interim government to assume power in Afghanistan, oversee the return of the refugees, and conduct elections. Under strong Pakistani pressure to make a positive political proposal, the parties announced their intention to name such a government in February, but were not able to agree on even a partial cabinet until June, so great were their divisions. The composition of the government reflected the political preferences of the donor governments of Pakistan (then still led by the late President Zia ul-Haq) and Saudi Arabia, more than those of the people of Afghanistan. The interim government did not succeed in catalyzing unity among the conflicting groups in the resistance. Despite early claims by some fundamentalist groups that this government would establish itself in Qandahar or Jalalabad soon after the Soviet evacuation of those cities last summer, it has not been able to function anywhere in Afghanistan.

Citing the failure of these two proposals to command the support of the Afghan people, UN Under-Secretary-General Diego Cordovez, who mediated the Geneva negotiations, suggested another approach in July. (Cordovez has since left his UN post to become foreign minister of Ecuador, but he continues to function as the Secretary General's Personal Representative on Afghanistan.) After extensive consultations with Afghans, Cordovez suggested that both sides agree to halt their struggle and allow a neutral "Government of Peace and National Reconstruction" to preside over refugee repatriation while preparing the ground for a *Loya Jirga* (grand council), which would determine the future government of the country. Kabul indirectly but mildly rejected the proposal, while at least one Soviet commentator spoke favorably of it; the nationalists in the Peshawar alliance and some major resistance commanders inclined favorably to at least some aspects of the proposal, but the fundamentalists rejected it.

Even as the continuation of the war and uncertainty about the political future of the country kept the refugees from returning in significant numbers, the international community has been preparing for what eventually might be the largest organized refugee-resettlement operation in history. On May 11, UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar appointed Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan to coordinate all aspects of this operation. Under his direction, the UN agencies have continued their planning and preparations.

The humanitarian agencies cannot deal with the formation of a new government, but they have begun work on what is perhaps the second major task, the removal of ubiquitous anti-personnel mines. While the departing Soviet forces are removing some minefields around their bases, they, the Afghan Army, and, to a lesser extent, the resistance forces, have scattered mines all over the countryside. Particularly dangerous are the camouflaged "butterfly" mines scattered hundreds at a time by helicopters. The UNHCR is taking advantage of the winter to train the refugees in the detection and neutralization of mines before they return.

The UNHCR has to confront political minefields as well. The distribution of the aid for refugee repatriation (projected to be $1.16 billion in the first stage and $839 million in the second) could decisively influence the political outcome in Afghanistan, as foreign military assistance has influenced the relative strength of political forces during the war. Hence, the Western donors have insisted that their contributions not be channeled through the current government, while the Soviets have insisted on the opposite. Under the agreement the UNHCR concluded with Kabul in May, the international aid teams may operate freely in any area of the country, regardless of who is in control, and may give aid directly through whatever channels are effective. The UNHCR has already tried to begin to assist in the rebuilding of the Panjsher Valley north of Kabul, where hundreds of refugee families a day, according to one report, are returning to their homes under the supervision of the efficient organization of Resistance Commander Ahmad Shah Massoud.

This agreement does not entirely solve the problem, however, as there remains the issue of whether the UN agencies can deal directly with resistance organizations inside Afghanistan or whether they must, as the United States and Pakistan prefer, deal with them through the Alliance and the interim government based in Peshawar.

The mines and the political questions, of course, are just the prelude to the problems of how to transport millions of refugees, how to feed them until the first crop comes in, how to find the wood beams to rebuild their homes, how to rehabilitate their unplowed land and silted irrigation systems, and how to rehabilitate the national road and marketing network. While international agencies, aided by the handful of Afghan technocrats and intellectuals scrutinize these questions, as the battles over the cities of Afghanistan continue and intensify, the peasant refugees wait—and hope.

Barnett R. Rubin, Ph.d., has written widely on Afghanistan.
Photo credit: UNHCR

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ated to Sri Lanka had returned to India, but that refugees from Colombo, Kandy, and Navaroli were afraid to return to their homes, and "the federal government had been apprised of this." Citing this report, USCR wrote to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi saying, "there is every indication that such fears are well-founded," and reiterating USCR's concern at the absence of a recognized international presence on the Indian side of the repatriation effort.

The Indian government replied that the return of Sri Lankan Tamils is entirely voluntary and that they are not compelled in any way to repatriate.

There was no indication, however, that Tamil refugee camp residents were given the option of remaining in India. In late 1988, about 1,500 Tamil refugees remained in camps, down from 26,000 at the end of 1987. Some 90,000 Tamil refugees remain outside the camps in India.

There was also discussion and debate concerning the possible repatriation of tens of thousands of tribal refugees—mostly Chakmas—from the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh, who have been living in five camps in the Indian state of Tripura. Access for outside observers, including UNHCR, to visit the camps is strictly limited. On several occasions in 1988, USCR requested permission to visit the camps, but such permission was never granted.

USCR issued a report in September, *From Isolation to Exile: Refugees from the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh*, which noted that observers described the camps as "squalid and appalling." Water supplies were described as "tenuous," food "meager," shelters "dilapidated," and blankets "in short supply." The Tripura state government, located in one of India's poorest regions, has spent more than $5.6 million since 1986 to assist the refugees, for which Chakma leaders have expressed their gratitude. But the assistance provided is not enough. A Children's Welfare Society delegation visiting the camps in December 1987 reported, "Malnutrition is everywhere. . . . A painful atmosphere reigns all around."

In April 1988, UNHCR repeated earlier offers to provide material assistance for the camps. Delhi responded, as it had to earlier requests, that international aid was unnecessary. Among the recommendations in *From Isolation to Exile*, USCR called upon India to invite UNHCR to establish a presence in Tripura state to allow it to exercise its protection mandate and to assist in the care of the refugees. "India should be commended for its humanitarian response to the refugees despite internal problems in the region," said the USCR report, "and should be encouraged to continue that protection until the safe repatriation of the refugees can be assured. The presence of UNHCR could only serve to supplement that protection, to place additional international pressure on the government of Bangladesh to make voluntary repatriation viable, and to bring the world's attention and response to the refugees' plight."

In July, a delegation from Bangladesh traveled to Tripura to meet with refugee leaders in an effort to convince them that conditions had improved in the CHT and that it was safe to return. The refugees presented the delegation with a list of conditions that had to be met before they would voluntarily repatriate, including the withdrawal of Bangladesh army and paramilitary forces from the CHT and the granting of autonomy to the region. Only 1,500 of the estimated 50,000 tribal refugees in India were reported to have returned to Bangladesh during the year.

Local Indian press reports in August said that Bangladesh religious minorities began crossing into India again following the declaration of Islam as the state religion of Bangladesh. No numbers of new arrivals were available. The declaration of Islam as the national religion was reportedly seen by the largely Buddhist tribal refugees as an indication that the time was not ripe for repatriation, as many had fled as a result of conflicts between Muslim settlers from the lowlands of Bangladesh into the tribal region.

Another refugee influx of indeterminate number during the year involved Tibetans fleeing unrest in China. While an aide to the Dalai Lama, the leader of the 100,000-strong Tibetan refugee community in India, estimated the numbers of new arrivals at between 80 and 100, other sources indicated that hundreds had crossed into India since the outbreak of rioting in Lhasa in October 1987.

Hundreds of Tibetan refugees staged demonstrations in December to protest Gandhi's visit to the People's Republic of China and his statements that India considers Tibet an autonomous region of China and will not tolerate anti-China political activities by Tibetan elements on Indian soil.

About 200 Burmese refugees arrived in India following the September 18 coup in that country. The refugees, mostly students, reportedly expressed a fear of reprisal should they be returned to Burma. They were reportedly being housed in three camps in Mizoram and Manipur states bordering Burma.

At mid-year, UNHCR was assisting 5,175 Afghan and 1,440 Iranian refugees in India, many of whom were students. These refugees tend to be highly mobile, moving on to other countries or, in some cases, repatriating. In late 1988, unconfirmed reports were circulating that an increased number of refugees from Afghanistan, believed to have been aligned with the Kabul regime, were beginning to appear in India.

Strife was reported between several foreign migrant groups and Indian locals in outlying regions. For example, rioting by Khasi tribals in the remote state of Meghalaya reportedly rendered thousands of Nepalis homeless. In West Bengal and Assam, Bangladeshi migrants were subject to attack from local tribal groups.

Thousands of Indian citizens have also been displaced in the course of communal violence. The most serious internal displacement is a consequence of violence generated as a result of Sikh separatist activities. There was a sharp escalation in killings related to this unrest in 1988. More than 2,140 people were killed during the year, up from 1,234 in 1987 and 525 in 1986. In March, hundreds of Hindus were reportedly driven out of rural areas of the Punjab, a predominantly Sikh state. Hardest hit were the districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur in the northern part of Punjab near the Pakistan frontier. It appeared that Sikh landowning families were also targeted and, in some cases, forced to abandon their homes.

Iran

Despite hosting one of the world's largest refugee populations—about 2.9 million refugees, according to Iranian government estimates—the counting of that population is vague and contradictory, and much about the conditions of these refugees remains murky. UNHCR had no presence at all in Iran until 1983, and continues a relatively modest program there. Iran basically provides assistance to refugees on its own with

little outside support or scrutiny.

The Islamic Republic says that it hosts 2.35 million Afghan refugees. The majority of Afghan refugees in Iran are economically self-reliant, but are almost exclusively on the lowest rung of the economic ladder, some reportedly in dire poverty. About three-quarters of the Afghan refugees are located in urban areas where they are engaged in unskilled labor. Only 3 percent live in refugee camps. Although the refugees are dispersed throughout the country, the government appears to keep a close eye on them. In September, the government announced its continuing computerized identification project for Afghan refugees. Afghans who failed to register, the announcement said, would be denied all social benefits and would not be allowed to remain in Iran. In August, USCR received an unsubstantiated report that 30 Afghan refugees, including women and children, were killed by Iranian Revolutionary Guards in the suburbs of Zahedan. On August 17, USCR wrote to the Iranian authorities asking that the allegation be investigated and the results of the investigation be made public. The government did not respond.

An estimated 102,000 Kurdish refugees arrived from Iraq during 1988, but about 45,000 appear to have repatriated during the year, leaving a net increase of 57,000. Although receiving far less international attention than those who arrived in August and September, most of the refugees—about 75,000—arrived between March and August. Many of them reportedly fled Iraq following the Iraqi chemical attack on Halabja in March, which took about 5,000 Kurdish lives. Although most of the Kurds who fled Iraq in August and September initially crossed into Turkey, some 11,000 are believed to have crossed directly into Iran. Others—estimates range widely from 2,000 to 37,000, with 16,000 being a likely accurate estimate—entered Iran via Turkey. The estimated 57,000 Iraqis who entered and stayed in Iran in 1988 join a previous population of about 400,000 refugees from Iraq. Given the limited access of outside observers to Iran, however, it is difficult to corroborate these figures.

Although initially receptive to the newly arriving Kurdish refugees, the government balked when Turkey began transferring the Kurds into Iran. On October 14, Iran turned back a convoy of about 3,000 Kurds at the border. Iranian officials reportedly complained that Turkish border officials had acted without prior consultation, and that the arrival of thousands of Iraqi refugees was causing problems in the western border provinces.

Camps holding Iraqi refugees were bombed on several occasions by the Iraqi Air Force. In a July attack in Oshnaviyeh, some 1,700 Kurdish refugees were reported to have suffered chemical injuries.

Following the July 20 armistice in the Iran-Iraq war, negotiations started for the repatriation of prisoners of war from the two countries. Some 19,284 Iranian POWs are registered with the ICRC in Iraq and 50,182 Iraqis in Iran, although both sides are believed to hold larger numbers. Some Iraqi POWs registered with the ICRC were later listed by Iran as killed in action. Thousands of other unaccounted for POWs are believed to have pledged allegiance to the Islamic Republic and been "released" in order to join its forces both in Iran and Lebanon.

Now that their repatriation is likely, many POWs are apparently balking at being returned home and appear to be asking for political asylum in Iran. As many as half reportedly have now expressed an unwillingness to return. Iraq has demanded that all Iraqi POWs be returned. An Iraqi official has said that "some of them will have to be reeducated in special camps."

In August, Iran's powerful Speaker of the House and acting commander of the armed forces, Hojatolislam Hashemi Rafsanjani, told a group of Iraqi exiles that all Iraqi refugees would be treated like Iranians at the close of the war and would be free to return to their homeland or go to any other place in the world.

Internal displacement of Iranian civilians intensified in March and April during the "war of the cities" in which both Iran and Iraq sent missile barrages into the population centers of their enemies. Several million people at least temporarily fled their homes in Tehran, Isfahan, and other cities. Tehran's population was estimated to have been reduced by as much as one-third, as many took temporary refuge in the Caspian Sea region and other, safer areas.

More than a million, and perhaps as many as two million, Iranians remained in exile, many of whom seemed to be awaiting signals about how they might be received should they return home. Many of the more recent exiles are draft-age men who had fled the war. However, a government announcement that all conscripts failing to register by October 10 and subsequently assessed to be deserters would be sentenced to execution probably did little to encourage them to return.

In November, Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, Khomeini's designated successor, wrote a letter to the Prime Minister saying, "We have several million Iranian refugees abroad." He urged the government to declare a general amnesty to those willing to sign a loyalty pledge so that they "could return freely to the country without being subjected to aggression and interrogation." Montazeri criticized the regime's human rights record saying, "We will get no results with frequent arrests, harshness, punishments, detentions, killings." Within days of Montazeri's letter, more than 240 of his followers were arrested, 9 of his closest associates were executed, and a wave of executions of a variety of opposition groups swept the country, second only to the number of executions that occurred at the beginning of the revolution.

Iraq

Although 1988 brought a ceasefire in the eight-year Iran-Iraq war, the immediate impact of the halt in fighting was an intensive Iraqi military offensive let loose upon Kurdish insurgents and the civilian population in the north. The offensive, launched on August 27 and lasting until September 5, caused more than 60,000 Kurds to flee into Turkey and 11,000 into Iran. As many as 40,000 others probably would have fled as well, except that they were cut off by Iraqi forces before being able to cross the border to safety.

Concerned about earlier refugee reports of chemical attacks on Kurdish villages during the spring and summer months, USCR wrote to Iraq on August 19 expressing its concern. USCR said, "We hope, ultimately, to eliminate the violations of human rights that cause people to flee their homes in the first place. With this humanitarian goal in mind, we respectfully urge your government to desist from further attacks using chemical weapons that can cause such rampant and indiscriminate casualties." No reply was received. The major offensive started a week later.

This was likely the most dramatic and intense chapter in Iraq's repression of the Kurdish minority, which had

Kurdish refugees from Iraq crowd into temporary shelter in Iran. Sipa Press/Ozturk

become more systematic in 1987 and 1988 with the destruction of hundreds of Kurdish villages and forced displacement and relocation of between 500,000 and a million of Iraq's 3.5 million Kurds. Such crackdowns on the Kurds in the mountainous north of Iraq have also occurred in 1974 and 1983, creating mass displacements.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz confirmed reports that thousands of Kurds were being relocated to government-controlled housing. "This is not a deportation of people. This is a reorganization of the urban situation in a mountainous and difficult country," he said. Aziz said that Iraq had made a decision to "clear the region and eliminate once and for all the places where the rebels used to be." He categorically denied the use of chemical weapons.

A medical team from a private U.S. group, Physicians for Human Rights, examined and interviewed Kurdish refugees in Turkey and determined that they were, in fact, the victims of chemical attack. The same conclusion was reached by Amnesty International and the U.S. government.

Iraq refused to allow the UN to send investigators to examine allegations of the use of chemical weapons. The government did take a group of journalists on a tightly controlled tour on September 17. Even from the vantage of their helicopters, the journalists witnessed dozens of scorched and flattened villages. They also saw Iraqi soldiers in trucks wearing gas masks. The governor of Dahuk province told the reporters that 200 villages in his jurisdiction alone had been destroyed as part of the effort to relocate the Kurds out of the mountains.

On September 6, the government announced a "general and comprehensive amnesty for Iraqi Kurds." The government said it was "opening the door to the misguided even if they be among the vilest of people and the most accursed."

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) declined to participate in the repatriation of Kurds following the amnesty announcement, and UNHCR was not invited to participate. The government announced on September 23 that 44,844 Kurds had responded to the amnesty. Nearly all of these were believed to have returned from Iran, rather than Turkey. Only 1,467 were independently reported to have returned from Turkey, and there were questions whether their repatriation was voluntary. An Amnesty International delegation to Turkey reported that some refugees who had initially agreed to return had changed their minds, but were sent back anyway. AI noted that it had received reports in the past of Kurds being imprisoned and executed after responding to previous amnesties.

The journalist tour group, mentioned previously, was presented with a group of 200 Kurds by the authorities as having returned after the amnesty was declared. However, interviews revealed that none of them had actually left the country at all.

War-related displacement also affected other segments of the Iraqi population, particularly during the "war of the cities" between February 19 and April 18 in which Iran and Iraq traded missile attacks aimed at urban civilian populations. The number of displaced persons, either for 1988 or the duration of the war, has not been determined.

Some 27,000 Iranian refugees are believed to reside in refugee camps in Iraq, 26,000 of whom are Iranian Kurds interned in the Al-Tash camp west of Baghdad. Opponents of the Khomeini regime, most of these Kurds had moved to Iraq prior to the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war.

An undetermined number of other Iranian refugees are not living in camps, perhaps triple the camp population. Although Iraqi military communiques for years have mentioned the entry of Iranian refugees, no totals for their numbers have been given.

A small group of about 170 Iranian refugees have been housed in the Shomeli camp since 1983. They are assisted by the ICRC and are awaiting possible third country resettlement. UNHCR, which placed a representative in Baghdad in April, is assisting in the resettlement to third countries of 280 Iranian refugees, of whom 11 have been accepted for resettlement.

Israel

Although the number of Jews who left the Soviet Union in 1988 was 19,286, the highest annual total in the 1980s, the percentage of those opting to immigrate to Israel continued to decline. A preliminary total of only 2,283, or 12 percent, chose *aliyah*—immigration to Israel. Most of the remainder were admitted to the United States. In contrast, in 1972, when 31,681 Jews left the Soviet Union, 99.9 percent went to Israel.

To reverse this trend, Israel expended great effort during the year to make it more difficult for Soviet Jews with exit visas for Israel to "drop out" after arriving in Vienna, the usual first stopover for Soviet emigres. Instead, Israel attempted to redirect exiting Jews to Bucharest, from which they would be flown directly to Israel. However, by October, it appeared evident that the Netherlands, which assists with visas for Soviet Jews in the absence of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Soviet Union, would not comply with the Israeli plan.

Nevertheless, with the trend in Soviet Jewish emigration clearly on the increase, and with Israeli officials predicting the exit of 30,000 Soviet Jews in 1989, the Israeli Ministry of Immigration Absorption announced in December plans to integrate 3,000 new Jewish immigrant families from the USSR.

More than one million Jewish refugees are estimated to have been resettled in Israel since its creation in 1948. Because of the 1950 Law of Return, which abolished all restrictions on Jewish immigration, and the 1952 Citizenship Law, by which every Jew is granted citizenship upon arrival in Israel, Israel does not accord refugees a special status, but counts them in its total immigrant pool. However, Israel did admit 12,965 new immigrants or potential immigrants in 1987, of whom 1,588 were from Iran, 2,172 from the Soviet Union, 1,689 from Romania. Immigration statistics for 1988 were not yet available.

No progress was made in 1988 for the repatriation or compensation of Palestinian refugees who left their homes as a result of the 1948 war, as called for by UN General Assembly Resolution 194. Israel does not recognize the resolution, on the grounds that it does not account for Jewish refugees who fled Arab states during the 1948 war.

USCR received reports of internal displacement of Israeli Bedouins following the destruction of their homes in the vicinity of Beersheba and the Negev area. Most of the incidents, involving the demolition of at least 49 homes in October and November, stemmed from a long-standing feud following the 1980 "Law on the Acquisition of Lands," by which many Bedouin refused compensation for the expropriation of their ancestral lands.

Occupied Territories

For more than half of Israel's 40-year existence, it has occupied lands conquered in the Six Day War of 1967, which are overwhelmingly populated by Palestinian Arabs.

The West Bank includes 385,634 UNRWA-registered refugees out of an Arab population of about 850,000, and the Gaza Strip holds 459,074 registered refugees out of a total Arab population of about 650,000.

Relations between Palestinians and the Israelis reached an all-time low as the Palestinians declared an *intifada*, the Arabic word for "uprising," which lasted the entire year. Violent demonstrations, strikes, barricades of burning tires, stone and molotov cocktail throwing were daily events in refugee camps and towns throughout the territories, as were shootings, teargassing, arrests, and beatings on the part of Israeli security forces.

The *intifada* started in the refugee camps of the Gaza Strip following an incident on December 8, 1987, when an Israeli truck struck a taxi near Gaza, killing four Palestinian refugees.

The uprising quickly spread to the West Bank and later to East Jerusalem. On the 11th month anniversary of the *intifada*, UNRWA reported a total of 11,449 casualties in the Gaza Strip alone, including 1,140 shot, 6,010 beaten, 768 injured by rubber bullets, and 3,066 requiring treatment for teargas inhalation. Children age 15 and under represented 58 percent of these casualties, including 21 deaths.

As of December 12, 1988, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) recorded 250 deaths of Palestinians, a figure that does not include those killed by Jewish settlers in the territories. The IDF figure was the lowest tally of fatalities; most other sources, including the U.S. government—which used a figure of 366 in its human rights report—gave higher counts.

Most estimates of the number of people arrested during the year exceeded 18,000. Total casualty figures were in the 20,000 range.

In March, the UNRWA Advisory Commission in Vienna recommended that the agency provide temporary emergency humanitarian assistance to non-refugees, and urged UNRWA to monitor human rights in the territories.

Statistics on the uprising rarely distinguished between registered refugees and other local residents. The Database Project on Palestinian Human Rights (DPPHR) specified that 107 of 390 persons killed, or 27 percent, were residents of refugee camps. However, the number of refugees killed is undoubtedly much higher, as known refugees on the list were not specified by the DPPHR as such, and because, in any case, only 26 percent of the refugees in the West Bank and 55 percent of the refugees in the Gaza Strip actually live in camps.

The combination of curfews, violent clashes between demonstrators and security forces, and frequent strikes by the Palestinian commercial sector or labor force seriously disrupted social and economic life of the refugee population.

Curfews and other travel restrictions, often preventing refugees from reaching their jobs, were in effect at one place or another almost throughout the year. In March, on "Land Day," which commemorates the deaths of six Israeli Arab protesters in 1976, the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip

were sealed off for several days for the first time since the occupation began. Total or partial sealing off of large areas involving hundreds of thousands of people occurred again during the course of the year on other days likely to result in demonstrations.

For days or weeks at a time, certain refugee camps or towns would be placed under virtual military siege, during which all utilities would be cut and strict curfews imposed. Garbage would go uncollected, UNRWA access to camps was impeded, and food shortages were reported.

Refugee camps and other areas were at times also declared closed military areas, preventing access by the news media and other outsiders. During a visit by UN Undersecretary General Marrack Goulding on January 13, Jabalia camp, the largest refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, was abruptly declared a closed military area, preventing Goulding's visit.

At times the IDF would erect physical barriers—often concrete-filled steel drums surrounded and topped by barbed wire—to close off the entrances to refugee camps.

On March 14, USCR wrote to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir concerning the deterioration of human rights and physical safety in Palestinian refugee camps. While acknowledging that violence in the camps "is in no small measure a result of combatant Palestinian elements operating from these very areas," USCR implored the Israeli Prime Minister "to set distinct limits on Israeli military and security movements—to say clearly and forthrightly that Israel will not violate the sanctity of hospitals, places of worship, UNRWA facilities, or homes without a limited and specifically drawn warrant."

On April 13, Prime Minister Shamir wrote to USCR saying, "I agree with you that the neutrality and sanctity of hospitals, holy places, and international facilities must be respected if we are to nurture hope for better days amid chaos and violence. The standing orders to our security forces are clear and emphatic on this issue." However, the Prime Minister said, "There is a danger if we make our prescription in this regard absolute, we shall only encourage more abuse and carnage." Shamir went on to say that instances in which IDF soldiers entered hospitals, mosques, and UNRWA facilities have been investigated and that "the reasons for the actions have been examined under the most stringent criteria," and that "transgressors will be punished" if these reasons are deemed insufficient.

On April 21 and again on August 19, USCR wrote to the Israeli authorities expressing concern about deportation orders against groups of Palestinians, citing the Geneva *Convention* prohibition of individual or mass deportations from occupied territories.

On June 16, an official of the Israeli Ministry of Justice wrote to USCR saying that "expulsion orders have been issued to chief instigators of the current turmoil . . . only as a last resort" and with due process guarantees.

Excluding 15 Palestinians expelled on January 1, 1989, the Israeli authorities expelled 36 Palestinians during the year.

Other measures included demolitions and sealings of homes and rooms belonging to people suspected of engaging in violent activities. As of December 2, the Hebrew-language press was reporting the destruction of 138 houses during the year on security grounds.

Education for Palestinian refugee children was seriously disrupted during the year. UNRWA reported all 98 of its schools in the West Bank closed during 1988, except for a seven-week period between May and July when classes were held intermittently. On the whole, Gaza schools did somewhat better, with students there losing an estimated 35 percent of instructional time during the year. All universities and colleges in the territories, including four UNRWA-operated vocational and teacher training schools, were closed for the entire year. The authorities indicated that they might be reopened at the end of February 1989.

Jordan

King Hussein's announcement on July 31 severing Jordanian links with the Israeli-occupied West Bank and rescinding Jordan's claim of sovereignty over that land also served as an attempt to distinguish more clearly Palestinian and Jordanian nationality, causing concern and anxiety among Palestinian refugees on both banks of the Jordan River.

For 38 years prior to the July 31 announcement, Jordan had held to the unity of the populations bisected by the Jordan River and attempted to minimize differences between the two sides. However, King Hussein flatly proclaimed, "Jordan is not Palestine." Residents of the West Bank before July 31 would henceforth be considered Palestinians, not Jordanians. By the same token, residents of the East Bank, including Palestinian refugees, are considered to be Jordanian citizens by the Jordanian government.

This policy change actually does not alter the legal status of East Bank Palestinians, who have had Jordanian citizenship all along. Calling them "the Jordanian citizens of Palestinian origin in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," King Hussein said, "All of them have citizenship rights and commitments just like any other citizen regardless of his origin."

While the impact on the West Bank was immediately apparent with the cancellation of a $1.5 billion Jordanian-sponsored development plan, the dissolution of the lower house of Parliament, half of whose seats had been reserved for the West Bank, and the cessation of salary checks to Jordanian civil servants there, the impact on Palestinians in the East Bank was less clear.

Some Palestinians expressed concern that being called "Jordanians" would be unacceptable to them, and suggested that it could undermine their right to repatriation. The Jordanian Interior Minister said that UNRWA services would remain as before; UNRWA has confirmed this understanding. The UN resolutions that define which Palestinians are refugees and what the durable solutions on their behalf should be differ from the refugee definitions and solutions in the UN *Convention* regarding other refugees. Palestinian refugees are defined as persons residing in Palestine two years prior to the outbreak of hostilities in 1948, who lost their homes and livelihood as a result of that war. The UNRWA mandate recognizes only repatriation or compensation as permanent solutions of the Palestinian refugee problem. Therefore, citizenship in another country, such as Jordan—which would represent the cessation of refugee status for other refugee groups covered by the UN *Convention* and *Protocol*—does not terminate a Palestinian's refugee status.

USCR wrote to the Jordanian authorities to clarify the status of Palestinian refugees. In response, the government stated that there was "no change" in the refugees' situation following the decision to cut ties with the West Bank. The letter said, "Refugees in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan enjoy the same rights and obligations as native-born Jordanians, whether political, so-

A terrified woman grabs her child at the sound of gunfire in Beirut's Shatila refugee camp. Reuter/J. Salidi

cial, or economic. The refugees can exercise the right to vote, to legislate, at the national and municipal levels, and the right to organize trade unions, as well as other rights."

Jordanian citizenship would not be extended to about 3,000 Palestinian deportees and members of the Palestine National Council on the East Bank, according to local press reports. These people, along with West Bank Palestinians, would be issued 2-year temporary passports for travel purposes only, not the 5-year passports for Jordanian citizens. The two bridges linking Jordan and the West Bank remained open, although stays in Jordan for travellers from the West Bank were reduced from three months to one. The Interior Minister indicated that West Bank Palestinians would not be permitted to immigrate to Jordan to join their families on the East Bank and become Jordanian citizens. On the other hand, the King reportedly said, "Whoever chooses not to be Jordanian can leave."

This has led to speculation and fear in some Palestinian quarters that, being regarded as Jordanians, they might be found to be insufficiently loyal to the King if they continue to maintain and express their Palestinian national identity.

At year's end, the actual circumstances for Palestinian refugees were essentially unchanged. There were reports that Palestinian refugee camps would no longer be considered as distinct electoral constituencies, but that individual Palestinian refugee voters in Jordan would be integrated with other constituencies.

Kuwait

Nearly 60 percent of Kuwait's population of 1.7 million is comprised of expatriates. Even long-term expatriates receive only temporary residence visas, and can be summarily expelled without charge or appeal. Kuwait is not a signatory to the UN *Convention* and *Protocol* on refugees and does not recognize or grant refugee status. Potential asylum seekers have been reportedly returned to their countries of origin.

In recent years, tens of thousands of expatriates have been deported, many for security reasons. In 1986, 27,000 people were deported. Most of the estimated 15,000 persons deported in 1988 were expelled for entering the country without proper documentation or for expiration of residence permits.

In February, three "Arabs" and 17 Palestinians were reportedly expelled following their participation in a demonstration purportedly in support of the uprising in the Israeli occupied territories.

In the twelve months ending in April 1988, UNHCR was given access to several hundred refugees seeking third-country resettlement, including Iranians, Afghans, Iraqis, stateless Arabs, and Palestinians.

There are an estimated 30,000 Iranians in Kuwait, at least hundreds of whom are believed to be political exiles.

As many as 400,000 Palestinians reside in Kuwait. They receive no assistance from UNRWA, since they are outside UNRWA's area of operations. Most of them, however, have traveled to Kuwait from Jordan, where

it is likely many had been registered refugees.

Lebanon

The fighting in Lebanon took a strange turn in 1988. After years of back and forth battles pitting Palestinians, Christians, Shia Muslims, Druze, and Sunni Muslims against each other, the major bloodletting in 1988 resulted from internal conflicts within these groups: pro-Arafat Palestinians fighting dissident Palestinian groups; the Shia Amal militia versus Hezbollah Shia Muslims; and Christian Lebanese Forces facing off against their Christian counterparts in the Fifth Brigade of the Lebanese Army and elsewhere. All of these clashes resulted in further casualties and displacement of civilians. And the hand of foreign powers—principally Syria, Israel, and Iran—exacerbated and complicated these conflicts.

The year began on a hopeful note as the Shia Amal militia announced the end of its 32-month siege on the Shatila and Burj-el-Barajneh Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut. Amal leader Nabih Berri said that Amal's unilateral withdrawal and lifting of the blockade was "a gift to our brothers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" who, at that time, were a month into the uprising against Israeli occupation that would continue the rest of the year.

For the first time in nearly three years, Palestinian men and teenage boys were able to venture outside of the confines of the camp. However, the power vacuum was quickly filled by Syrian troops who took over Amal observation posts surrounding the camps and reportedly began arresting some of the Palestinians who left them. In the course of the year, a dissident Palestinian group closely linked to the Syrians, Fatah-Intifada, led by Col. Saeed Musa (Abu Musa), waged a concerted battle to wrest control of the Beirut refugee camps from the mainline PLO Fatah guerrillas loyal to Yasser Arafat. Heavy artillery barrages from Syrian lines destroyed most of what was left of the Beirut refugee camps that had borne the brunt of years of fighting.

By June 27, the Arafat loyalists inside Shatila had surrendered. Intense fighting in the Burj el-Barajneh camp ensued, with the defeat of Arafat's guerrillas on July 8. Both camps—which had been home for thousands of Palestinians prior to the 1982 Israeli invasion—were nearly drained of their civilian refugee populations by the time of their military defeat. Only about two hundred civilian refugees remained in Shatila and a few thousand, at most, in Burj-el-Barajneh in the final days. Both camps lay in ruins. Hardly an undamaged structure stood in either camp. The Haifa Hospital, made famous as a safe haven for refugees through years of bombardments, massacres, and street fighting, was destroyed and empty. One observer commented that the once-brimming Beirut camps looked like ghost towns. In the last round of fighting, 112 people were killed, 502 wounded, and at least 8,000 refugees displaced.

UNRWA efforts to clear the rubble and begin reconstruction of the camps were hampered by lack of funds and insufficient cooperation from the relevant Syrian and Lebanese authorities. By the end of July, UNRWA was estimating that 154 families were living in the ruins of Shatila and about 6,000 in Burj-el-Barajneh. UNRWA made progress throughout the last half of the year in clearing rubble, restoring basic infrastructure, and repairing damaged shelters. By November, UNRWA was reporting that more than 170 shelters in Burj-el-Barajneh had been fully repaired and that almost 100 more were nearing completion. UNRWA installations were again operational and four agency schools were ready to reopen. Reconstruction of the Shatila camp was proceeding at a slower pace.

Arafat loyalists and many refugees fell back to the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp, though tensions flared at times there as well, including fighting between pro- and anti-Arafat factions in March and June and explosions within the camp and clashes with the Amal militia outside the camp in June.

The two Sidon-area camps, Ein el-Hilweh and Mieh Mieh, as well as the Tyre-area camps were the frequent targets of mock air raids by Israeli jets and helicopter gunships during the year. On a number of occasions, the southern Lebanese refugee camps were struck from the air or the sea by Israeli rockets.

When Amal withdrew from the Beirut camps in January, it did not also abandon its positions around the Rashidieh camp south of Tyre. UNRWA trucks bringing basic commodities into the camp had to pass through Amal militia checkpoints. Scattered clashes were also reported between pro- and anti-Arafat factions in Rashidieh and informed sources predicted that Rashidieh would be the most likely scene of major renewed inter-Palestinian fighting should it recur.

Amal also controlled the areas surrounding the Burj el-Shemali and El Buss camps in the Tyre area. At various times, the PLO accused Amal of entering these camps, making arrests, and in some cases killing Palestinian residents. On March 14, an UNRWA employee and his son were shot and killed on the main street of the El Buss camp.

It was a rough year for both UNRWA and ICRC. Following the kidnapping of two of its international staff in February, apparently by Palestinians in the Ein el Hilweh camp, UNRWA withdrew 9 of 14 international staff from the country and the remaining 5 to offices in Christian-controlled East Beirut. On February 16, the agency transferred supervision of its Tripoli and Beka'a Valley operations to the Damascus office and suspended "all other activities in Lebanon requiring direct supervision by international staff." On February 22, UNRWA announced that operations could no longer be conducted in Sidon or Tyre, and that "UNRWA offices and installations will have to close as international supervision ceases and supplies dwindle." UNRWA announced a resumption of activities in March following the release of the two staff members. In October, UNRWA reported that, in addition to the two international staff members who were kidnapped, four area staff were killed in 1988, bringing to 33 the number of UNRWA staff killed in Lebanon since 1982. A further 14 staff were listed as missing or detained, as of June 30. Two Oxfam officials, including the director for Oxfam's operations in the Middle East, were briefly abducted in the Ein el-Hilweh camp in March. On December 23, the ICRC withdrew from Lebanon following the abduction of one of its delegates in Sidon on November 17 and threats to its personnel.

Palestinians were not the only group further displaced by political violence in 1988. Some of the fiercest fighting in years was waged in May in the southern suburbs of Beirut between the two Shia groups, Amal and the Hizbollah. The fighting caused massive destruction and displacement of roughly half of the 500,000–600,000 residents of the suburbs. Although many were believed to have returned to their homes after the fighting subsided, many of those homes were badly damaged or destroyed.

After a six-month siege, nothing remains of this family's home in Burj el Barajneh refugee camp, Beirut, Lebanon.

Christians were also not immune to violence in 1988. Intense rivalry between Maronite Christian factions surfaced when President Amin Jamayel's term of office expired. Car bombs, assassinations, and other acts of violence and intimidation undermined security in Christian-controlled areas. The vehemently anti-Syrian and anti-foreign Christian Lebanese Forces, led by Samir Geagea, was also reported to have attacked and killed dozens of immigrant workers from Asia and Africa during the course of the year.

Lebanon continued to disintegrate into a patchwork of enclaves controlled by local militias, making it increasingly difficult to remain a member of a minority group in an area controlled by the militia of a rival group. In 1988, Shi'ite Muslims reportedly expelled 20 Christian and Druze families from the Qatrani village in south Lebanon, and Christian militias expelled 60 Shi'ite families from the village of Mogheira.

On April 28, the third anniversary of the displacement of the Christian inhabitants from the areas east of Sidon, a demonstration involving thousands of Christian displaced people was held demanding "safe and dignified return to our areas." The demonstration was reportedly fired upon as it reached the Mansur Palace, leaving seven persons injured.

Nepal

Although Nepal hosts about 12,000 Tibetan refugees, most of whom fled China in 1959, or who are the children of those who fled, Nepal was notably colder to a group of new Tibetan arrivals in 1988. The 26 Tibetans, aged 13 to 29, were jailed for two months in Kathmandu before being forcibly repatriated to China in September. Despite evidence of growing unrest in China, Nepali officials announced that Tibetans lacking valid Chinese travel documents would not be considered for refugee status, but would be returned to China.

Pakistan

There was a mix of hope and anxiety among Afghan refugees in Pakistan in 1988 as the prospects for a return to their homeland moved closer to reality, but also as they lost their best friend and most steadfast supporter, President Zia-ul Haq, who was killed in a plane crash in August, and their welcome in Pakistan continued to show strains.

Some 3,272,000 Afghan refugees live in 344 camp-like villages in Pakistan. Three-quarters of them—about 2.2 million persons—reside in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) on the Afghan border in 250 refugee villages. Some 835,400 refugees live in Baluchistan Province; 180,500 in Punjab; and 20,000 in Sind. The presence of the world's largest concentration of refugees, many of whom have been in Pakistan for the better part of the decade, has had a significant impact on the local economic and social life. While Afghan refugees have enjoyed a substantial degree of freedom, allowing them to move freely outside of refugee camps and to participate in the economic life of the country, utterly transforming the pace of life of towns such as Peshawar, their presence has also caused resentment. In other areas, such as the Kurram agency in the NWFP, the Afghan refugee population actually outnumbers the local Pakistani population. The presence of 345,000 Sunni Afghan refugees in Kurram has upset the delicate Sunni-Shia balance among the area's 290,000 local population, causing tensions that have, at times, flared into violence.

The refugees have been blamed for a host of social ills, and the cross-border raids and terrorist bombings that have killed many Pakistani citizens as well as refugees, are blamed on the refugee presence, although the refugees themselves are clearly not responsible for these attacks.

An indication of the change in mood came during the November elections to determine a successor to Zia, in which the Afghan refugees were barred from entering Pakistan cities and towns and told not to leave the refugee villages for

the first time in a decade. The Pakistan People's Party of Benazir Bhutto had charged that Afghan refugees would be used to cast illegal votes against her party, which has taken a stance more critical of the refugee presence than the Islamic Democratic Alliance.

In addition to the 3.3 million registered Afghan refugees, another 170,000 to 300,000 unregistered Afghans are in the country. At least some of the large number of previously unregistered refugees in Baluchistan Province—about 200,000—were given provisional registration during the year.

The government has been selective in registering new arrivals. In some places, such as Peshawar in November, registrations came to a halt altogether. In others, registration was used as an inducement by the government to have refugees settle in established refugee settlements of the government's choice.

About 40,000 new arrivals crossed into Pakistan during 1988. Most of those who entered the NWFP apparently were fleeing fighting in the Nangarhar and Konar areas, while thousands of others are believed to have entered during the course of the year to Baluchistan, mostly fleeing fighting in and around Qandahar. In November, an influx of about 20,000 entered and were reported by international agency sources as having been registered by NWFP authorities. While some sources indicated that the total could be much higher, since newcomers use several crossing points, one NWFP official told USCR that the number registered was only between 3,000 and 4,000.

In 1987, the government was relocating new arrivals and unregistered refugees to the Mianwali district of the Punjab. An estimated 170,000 were settled there. Apart from a small number of new arrivals who were shifted to the Kot Chandna refugee village at the beginning of the year, no further relocations took place to the Mianwali district of the Punjab during 1988.

About 70 percent of the refugees were engaged in agriculture in Afghanistan, but few have continued to farm in Pakistan (leading to concerns that valuable farming skills are not being taught a new generation). Most refugee men are engaged in casual employment, such as general labor. A minority have permanent jobs in the transportation industry or are self-employed as shopkeepers or skilled laborers.

More than three-quarters of the refugees are women and children. Female literacy lags far behind male literacy, and Afghan refugee women are virtually precluded from higher education. Girls represent only about 7,000 of the 120,000 students in UNHCR-assisted schools. Those few girls enrolled in school rarely attend for more than three years of elementary education.

Afghan women in the refugee villages observe the rules of *purdah* much more strictly than they generally did in Afghanistan. As a consequence, they are usually confined to the family tent or mud-brick compound and rarely leave their homes, unless heavily veiled and accompanied by a male relative. In part due to the lack of trained female health personnel able to visit the refugee women in their homes, their health status is not entirely clear. Some health workers have reported a high incidence of hypertension and high blood pressure, related to the trauma they have experienced and the continuing stress in their lives. However, infant mortality rates, once among the highest in the world, have dropped substantially in recent years from 156 deaths of children under one year of age per 1,000 live births in 1984 to a ratio of 119/1,000 in 1985 and 81/1,000 in 1986. More recent infant mortality statistics are not available.

The government of Pakistan provides about half of the cost of caring for the refugees; significant contributions have come from the international community as well, including several major World Bank/UNHCR income-generating projects.

A total of 2,608 non-Afghan refugees had been registered by UNHCR in Pakistan, as of October. The vast majority, 2,364, are Iranians, most of whom live in urban areas of Sind and Punjab provinces. The majority of the registered Iranian refugees are believed to be Baha'is or Christians. About 300 asylum seekers were awaiting decisions about their refugee status with UNHCR at the end of the year. Some 1,227 non-Afghan refugees were resettled to third countries during 1988, and about 500 more had been accepted for resettlement. As many as 20,000 other Iranians not officially recognized as refugees are believed to live in Pakistan. Many of them are young men of draft age. In September 1987, following earlier violent clashes between pro- and anti-Khomeini Iranians in Quetta and Karachi, the Pakistan Minister of the Interior announced that the government would deport all people who had entered Pakistan illegally to their countries of origin. The threat was repeated again in April in a speech by the Interior Minister to the National Assembly. In response, USCR wrote to the Interior Minister urging him to provide a dignified and safe existence for Iranian refugees in Pakistan, saying that, for many, "the refuge provided by the Pakistani border is their only hope for personal security." The letter recognized Pakistan's "generous and humane" treatment of Afghan refugees, but noted that many Iranians live in crowded and unsafe conditions. "If they fear that your government will arrest and deport them," said USCR, "they are likely to find themselves in even more difficult and dangerous circumstances."

Thousands of Pakistanis were reportedly rendered homeless in communal violence between Sunnis and Shias in late May and early June. The heaviest violence was reported in and around the northern town of Gilgit, and spread east to the Baltistan area. Among the hardest hit were several Ismaeli villages, which were attacked and burned, from which thousands reportedly fled. On December 5, a group of Iranian refugees lined up outside of UNHCR were fired upon by an unknown assailant, leaving one dead and five injured.

Saudi Arabia

Although Saudi Arabia plays host to millions of Muslims throughout the world for the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, and employs a large expatriate work force—about 2 million foreign workers, relative to a Saudi population of 11 million—it does not recognize asylum seekers or refugees, as such.

It is estimated that 250,000 expatriates in Saudi Arabia are, in fact, refugees. They are Eritreans from Ethiopia, Palestinians, Sudanese, Afghans, South Yemenis, and other nationalities. But they are treated as other foreign workers; their stays depend upon the sponsorship of their employers, and they face deportation upon the expiration of their employment. A UNHCR office in Riyadh assists, where possible, with third-country resettlement in such cases.

Sri Lanka

A peace accord signed by the leaders of Sri Lanka and India in July 1987 that was intended to bring an end to the civil

An Afghan child with her mother in a Pakistan refugee camp. Minneapolis Star and Tribune

strife that has wracked that island nation, instead has had the effect, in the short term, of heightening violence in some parts of the country and, therefore, causing further displacement and homelessness.

While battling between the Sinhalese army and Tamil insurgents ended for the most part, military clashes between the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) and the remaining Tamil insurgents disrupted the lives of large numbers of civilians in the Northern and Eastern provinces. In late 1987, half of Jaffna's population, about 500,000 people, predominantly Tamils, were displaced from their homes, many of which were destroyed in the fighting.

Although access to Jaffna continued to be limited, it appeared that reconstruction of destroyed homes was proceeding slowly. An estimated 60 percent of homes were destroyed or seriously damaged in Jaffna during the fighting. Thousands more Tamils continued to be displaced during the year as a result of IPKF military operations in the northern Batticaloa district and the Mullaitivu district in the combined North-Eastern Province.

Additional thousands, predominantly Muslims and Sinhalese, were forced by Tamil militants to leave their homes in the Eastern Province. The Sri Lankan government estimates that 96,000 people have been driven from their homes by Tamil militants, and remain displaced. Tension and violence in the Eastern Province escalated as both the government and Tamil insurgents worked to tip the demographic balance in the Eastern Province prior to provincial elections in November which merged that province with the predominantly Tamil Northern Province. The Eastern Province was 42 percent Tamil, 33 percent Muslim, and 25 percent Sinhalese. In January, Tamil guerrillas attacked and burned a Muslim village in the Eastern Province, Karbala, displacing about 15,000 persons. Later that same month, the government reportedly sent some 14,000 Muslim displaced persons back to their homes in the Eastern Province. It was not clear whether these were the same people displaced earlier in the month. The government reportedly tried to settle another 37,000 displaced families, many of whom were Sinhalese, into the Trincomalee district of the Eastern Province.

Those newly displaced persons joined some 450,000 other people who had already been displaced at the time the peace accord was signed.

At the same time, 1988 saw a sharp escalation in political violence within both the Tamil and Sinhalese communities. The newest development was increased violence in much of the south and west coastal areas by a radical Sinhalese group against persons identified with the ruling party, and retribution against that group by the army, which is predominantly Sinhalese. This violence became more acute as the presidential election neared in December.

Since the signing of the accord, 37,075 Tamil refugees have repatriated from India, as of November 19, of whom 12,000 returned spontaneously, and the remainder as part of the agreed repatri-

ation program between the governments of India and Sri Lanka. UNHCR assists refugees upon their return through its field offices in Mannar, Jaffna, and Trincomalee, which became operational in March, August, and September respectively.

Private European agencies assessing the repatriation in August found limited potential for follow-up and assessment of living conditions for the majority of returnees under the UNHCR programs. The government agency responsible for assisting returnees was only able to function intermittently due to the security situation. The assessment team noted an "increasingly complex and uncertain" security situation with guerrilla warfare between Tamil militants and the IPKF creating risk of random violence and intimidation for the civilian population. It also noted the danger of returnees with a history of political affiliation being singled out for coercion and persecution by either side. "In the most general sense," the report of the mission said, "it would seem that all young male Tamils are viewed as suspected militants or as being potentially informed of militant activities by the IPKF and are consequently at risk."

Syria

A total of 265,221 Palestinian refugees are registered with UNRWA in Syria. Although ten refugee camps have been established for them, they are free to live and work elsewhere, and more than 70 percent have opted to live outside the camps.

Although Palestinian refugees are able to pursue education and have a choice of occupation, they are, with rare exceptions, excluded from becoming citizens and from voting. About 3,500 Palestinian refugees have Syrian citizenship. The overwhelming majority, however, are considered temporary residents pending the outcome of the Arab-Israel conflict. Some restrictions in property ownership for Palestinians appear to have eased during the year.

Palestinian refugees, especially those loyal to Yasser Arafat's mainstream faction of the PLO, continued to be closely watched by Syrian security and intelligence forces. In April, Palestinians in Syria were hopeful of a possible rapprochement between Syria's President Hafez al-Asad and the PLO's Yasser Arafat in the aftermath of the funeral in Damascus of Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), one of the PLO's top leaders, who was killed in an Israeli commando raid in Tunis. Since a break in relations between Arafat and Assad in 1983, relations between Syria and the Palestinians have been strained. Syrian military intelligence and security forces have arrested politically active Palestinians—usually Arafat loyalists—in Syria, as well as Lebanon. An estimated 2,000 Palestinian political prisoners are believed held in Syrian jails. There have been frequent and consistent allegations of torture of Lebanese and Palestinian detainees in Syrian custody. In large part because of Syrian support for Palestinian dissidents in the fighting in refugee camps in Beirut, Lebanon, as well as the continued detention of thousands of Palestinians in Syria, the rapprochement did not come about.

Unconfirmed accounts of the arrests of hundreds of Palestinians, including those of Arafat loyalists in the Neirab camp near Aleppo and the Al-Yarmuk Palestinian quarter of Damascus, continued to be reported in August and September. Many arrests have reportedly been carried out by *Fara' Falastin*, the Palestine Branch, a section of Military Intelligence.

UNHCR has a very limited program of assistance in Syria for non-Palestinian refugees, including some 50 Eritreans, most of whom are students. About 300 displaced persons from Lebanon (both Palestinian and Lebanese) are assisted at the Sitti Zeinab camp near Damascus.

United Arab Emirates

Although having no mechanism for granting asylum, the United Arab Emirates have employed large numbers of foreign workers, including many who are believed to be refugees. Some Iranians and Iraqis have been assisted in obtaining third-country resettlement with the help of the UNHCR. Amnesty International has charged in both 1987 and 1988 that some Iraqi nationals have been arrested on grounds of their links to Shi'ite opposition groups in Iraq, tortured, and expelled. Most Iranians caught attempting to enter the UAE without proper documents have reportedly been sent back.

Yemen Arab Republic

In the aftermath of bloody fighting in January 1986 between rival factions of the ruling Yemeni Socialist Party, more than 50,000 refugees fled from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) to the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) in the north.

For nearly two years, the resource-poor YAR managed to care for the refugees without outside assistance. Despite the political differences between the YAR and the PDRY, both adhere to the idea that Yemen is a single nation, which made the YAR reluctant to designate those fleeing the south as refugees. However, in 1987, YAR did request help from UNHCR, which approved an emergency assistance program based on a count of 55,000 refugees, and opened an office in the capital, Sana'a, late in the year.

On May 4, an agreement was signed between the PDRY and the YAR to remove most border restrictions and allow people to pass through the frontier with only their personal identification cards. Previously, permission to cross the border was needed from both interior ministries.

Despite the open border agreement and an amnesty offer from the PDRY that was renewed for a third time at the end of 1987, there was little evidence that exiles were returning in 1988. The number who may have returned has likely been offset by others continuing to leave the PDRY. Since independence in 1967, at least 25 percent of PDRY's population has left for a combination of economic and political reasons.

About 20,000 of the refugees live in camps, which have faced serious problems, due, in part, to their remote locations, bad roads, and poor water supplies. Many of those living outside camps reside with relatives.

The YAR also hosts about 7,000 Eritrean refugees from Ethiopia. About 2,500 are located at the Al-Khauka camp on the Red Sea coast. The remainder live in Sana'a and other urban centers.

An undetermined number of Palestinians, who arrived in 1982–3 still live in camps. Many have left, however, as they have been closely watched by the YAR's National Security Organization and their movement and activity within the YAR has been restricted. Those who remain have not been recognized as refugees.

NORTH AMERICA

United States

The United States admitted 76,471 refugees in fiscal year 1988, an increase of 11,640 refugee admissions from the previous year. The most dramatic change was a 552 percent increase in refugee admissions from the Soviet Union. In FY 1987, Soviet emigres comprised about 6 percent of the total of U.S. refugee admissions; in FY 1988, Soviet admissions comprised 27 percent. The sharp increase in Soviet emigration caused the Reagan Administration to declare "an unforeseen refugee emergency" in April and to raise the overall refugee admission ceiling by 15,000 places to accommodate refugees from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

In July, however, the United States abruptly suspended refugee processing out of the U.S. embassy in Moscow, the route of entry for almost all Armenians leaving the Soviet Union under the U.S. refugee program. The U.S. government said that it simply had run out of money for the program and would not be able to resume processing until the beginning of the fiscal year in October. Many would-be emigrants were left stranded in the streets of Moscow. In response to their situation, the State Department partially reversed its policy and allowed an additional 400 people to emigrate. In August, an emergency supplemental appropriation of $24 million was signed into law, including $6 million to cover the admission of another 3,000 Soviet refugees in FY 1988. The remainder of the emergency funds was designated for overseas refugee assistance programs, primarily in Africa.

In October, President Reagan authorized the admission of up to 94,000 refugees for FY 1989, an increase over the FY 1988 ceiling of 87,500. However, 10,000 of these refugee admissions places were to be partially or completely funded by the private sector.

Despite the higher refugee admissions ceiling, it soon became evident that Soviet emigration was outpacing the number of refugee admissions places reserved for that nationality. A backlog of 17,000 Soviet refugee applications was reached in early December. On December 8, Attorney General Dick Thornburgh announced that up to 2,000 additional Soviet emigres would be admitted from Moscow through his parole authority and that all Soviet emigres in Rome, Italy, who could not be admitted as refugees, would be paroled into the United States.

Vietnamese-Americans hold a Washington, D.C. rally. Sign says, "Thousands of Vietnamese boat people are threatened in Thailand's seas." Quan Hoang

Later in December, the Reagan Administration transferred 7,000 FY 1989 refugee admissions places to Soviet emigres that had previously been allocated to refugees from Southeast Asia and the Middle East. The move prompted protests from USCR, as well as other refugee advocacy groups. The heads of the American Jewish Committee and the Indochina Resource Action Center wrote a joint letter to Secretary of State George Shultz saying, "Stopgap measures such as reallocating refugee slots

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Human Rights Versus Immigration Controls: A Canadian Profile

Tom Clark

It's not Fortress Canada. But Canada can no longer be viewed as the generous end of some international pipeline for refugees.

Canada's geography insulates it from major, direct refugee flows. But many asylum seekers come via other countries, provoking a Canadian government preoccupation with such transit. The leap in the numbers of asylum seekers spontaneously arriving in Canada—from around 5,000 in 1984 to around 40,000 in 1988—underscores the government's public statements that it now recognizes a role for Canada in offering asylum in addition to its traditional refugee resettlement role. Unfortunately, media and government overreaction to isolated incidents involving asylum seekers during the past two years has misdirected public attention and created serious misunderstandings.

In August 1986, 154 Tamils arrived by boat. Public reaction was massive. True, there were racist components to the generally negative public reaction. But the better hypothesis is that Canadians were angered by spontaneous arrival and by the apparent lack of control. In July 1987, the arrival of a second boat of 171 Sikhs in Nova Scotia, while it inspired a spontaneous outburst of local generosity, provided a basis for a repeat performance of national hysteria. The government called for an emergency session of Parliament and the introduction of "deterrence and detention" legislation. This draconian package sought wide discretionary powers to detain, to exclude persons from rights of refugee status by designating them security risks or criminals, and to turn away boats of refugees. The legislation, which became law in July 1988, created criminal offenses and stiff penalties for knowingly encouraging a refugee to seek help in Canada without necessary documents such as a visa, and sought discretionary powers to search and seize vehicles and other property associated with those suspected of knowingly encouraging refugees to come to Canada without proper documentation.

A companion bill, which became law at the same time, instituted a more streamlined procedure for determining refugee status. According to the new law, which went into effect at the beginning of 1989, asylum seekers would have to pass eligibility and credibility hurdles before having their asylum claims heard. Those not deemed credible or eligible could be deported, and even those seeking review of negative decisions could be removed from Canada pending a court decision on whether it would review the case. Under the law, reviews would only be based on questions of law, not on the factual merits of the asylum claim.

In early 1987, border crossings and airport arrivals from the United States increased significantly, a result of uncertainties about new U.S. immigration reform legislation and publicity about impending tightening of Canadian law. Voluntary agencies and private citizens coped marvelously with large increases in arrivals. They developed expanded reception-housing and orientation facilities. But, in the view of the federal government, these "waves" of refugees demanded a response. In February 1987, the government instructed immigration officials at the borders to send refugees back to wait in the United States if it was inconvenient to hold an "inquiry" on the spot.

The 1988 law went beyond this change by borrowing a concept popular among some European governments taking a more restrictive approach toward asylum seekers arriving via other countries after fleeing their homelands. Under this concept, another country could be presumed to be consistently safe for certain nationalities or classes of persons. No procedural safeguards to protect individual circumstances would be deemed necessary. A Canadian government report of March 1988 noted that 35 percent of all arrivals from Western European countries could be returned there within this framework. Up to 80 percent of arrivals from the United States could be returned. Although not implemented with the law in January 1989, the list of safe third countries remains a threat hanging over many asylum seekers.

With the free trade agreement comes a special interest in the U.S.-Canadian border. The 1988 law anticipated expeditious removal of asylum seekers coming across that border. Interviews of refugee claimants would take place at border crossings, so that those rejected could be removed directly and quickly to the United States. Most of those told to wait in the United States are obliged to sign a voluntary departure notice with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. This has the effect of foreclosing on a future request for asylum from the United States, and facilitating automatic deportation by the United States if Canada refuses to take the person in question.

Along with the increase in asylum seekers, there have been small increases in immigration-related refugee resettlement financed by government (to 13,000 places in 1988), and significant increases in privately sponsored refugee resettlement (to about 9,000 places). About a quarter of the government resettlement places are for refugees from Latin America, a quarter from Southeast Asia, a quarter from Eastern Europe, and the balance from other regions.

Under the resettlement schemes, persons deemed *Convention* refugees by the visa official based at certain Canadian posts overseas can be resettled in Canada provided they meet some immigration "admissibility" criteria. Increasingly, questions are being raised about the appropriateness of these highly discretionary procedures.

In addition to *Convention* refugees, other persons deemed "eligible" under designated immigration classes can be resettled if they also meet the immigration admissibility criteria. Some of the earliest of these programs date back to the cold war era. The *self-exile* class makes eligible almost all East European nationals who are outside their country and not yet resettled. Later special immigration programs permit greater equality among countries of origin. The *political prisoners and oppressed persons* class allows persons in countries such as Chile, Guatemala, and El Salvador to emigrate from their country to Can-

UNHCR/H. Gloaguen

ada, if they would meet a *Convention* refugee test if outside their country. The refugee program and other humanitarian immigration programs together resettle about 25,000 persons annually.

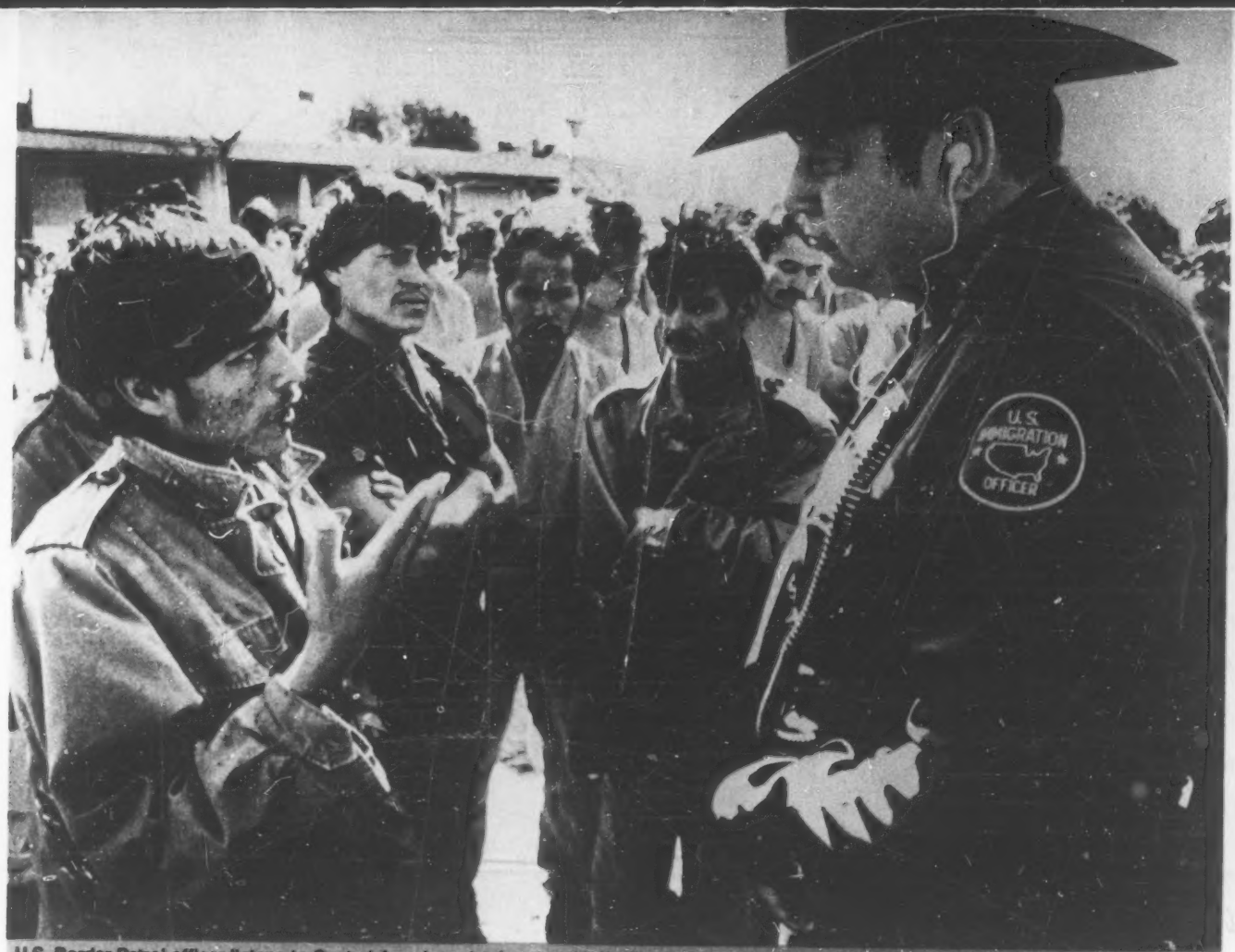
The flow of refugees spontaneously coming to Canada from those countries has been negligible when these resettlement programs are functioning. Logically, one might have expected Canada to introduce or improve resettlement programs in other countries from which refugees spontaneously arrive in Canada. However, viable Canadian refugee resettlement programs are lacking in many Western countries, other than for East European refugees.

There are two inconsistencies here. First, it is difficult to see why East European refugees face any greater protection problems than other refugees in Western countries. Secondly, the policy rewards countries that take on minimal protection responsibilities or meet their responsibilities badly. For example, Canada resettles refugees from Italy, which has not signed the *Protocol* to protect refugees beyond those from Eastern Europe. Countries such as West Germany, which are trying to live up to greater international protection obligations, receive no help in providing durable solutions from the Canadian resettlement program. Worse, Canada has contrived a scheme that threatens automatic return of refugees who move on spontaneously from those countries trying to meet fuller protection responsibilities.

The overseas procedure is increasingly presenting other problems. Many Canadian posts overseas are preoccupied with immigration concerns and procedures, rather than refugee protection. Even if selected, refugees must wait overseas pending cumbersome, and often archaic, medical and security procedures. From the time a refugee applies for the program until the refugee arrives in Canada, a year or more may have elapsed.

Although Canada has joined other Western asylum countries in providing permanent solutions for some spontaneously arriving refugees, it has preferred to contribute to international refugee protection through resettlement. The changes in Canadian law and practice during the last two years run parallel with restrictive changes in other Western countries. Within this general context, perhaps in part to make this point, Canada joined other Western countries in using short-term immigration control tactics at the expense of the human rights of refugees. However, the Canadian changes may be adding a nuance to the Western deterrence theme: Canada is now willing to play a significant role in providing asylum, but will play this role only within more secure international arrangements. Increased international activity in resettlement, therefore, would provide a welcome opportunity for needed reform of the Canadian program.

Tom Clark is the coordinator of the Canadian Inter-Church Committee for Refugees.



U.S. Border Patrol officer listens to Central American detainees at INS facility in Bayview, Texas. Washington Post/F. Johnston

(continued from page 83)

from other regions do not solve the problem, and, in fact, may harm refugees from other areas."

The government argued that the reallocation involved numbers "that might not be used in any event." Vietnam's nonresponse to a U.S. offer to resettle former prisoners and their families was blamed for the unused numbers.

USCR testified at a congressional hearing that the move sent "a dangerous signal at a critical time" to the regional asylum countries in Asia, other resettlement countries, and the would-be emigres in Vietnam. "We fear that more Vietnamese may choose to escape by boat when they become aware of the cutback in the Orderly Departure Program *refugee* number from 13,000 to 7,500."

The generous impulses of the United States, which leads the world in the number of refugees given permanent resettlement since 1975 and is the leading contributor to international refugee aid agencies, were checked again and again in 1988 by the dictates of budget cutting in the context of reducing the federal deficit.

In February, federal reimbursement to states for cash and medical assistance to refugees otherwise eligible for public assistance was reduced from the refugees' first 31 months in the United States to 24 months. In March, the federal government informed state refugee coordinators that there would be a 38 percent reduction in funding for state administration of refugee programs. The result, according to state refugee officials, would be the closing of refugee programs in 11 states, the elimination of key services in others, and an overall increase in welfare dependency rates, which had fallen in FY 1987. In August, the federal government reduced the period of eligibility for refugee cash and medical assistance from 18 to 12 months for those refugees not otherwise eligible for public assistance.

Reducing the deficit also took a chunk out of U.S. support for international refugee assistance in 1988. The U.S. contribution dipped 9 percent below the 1987 level across the board. The traditional 30 percent share of the UNHCR budget contributed by the United States dropped to 23 percent in 1988. The U.S. share of the contribution to ICRC dropped from 22 to 11 percent, and the contribution to UNRWA—at a time of great need in Lebanon and the Occupied Territories—dropped from $67 to $61.3 million.

There was a dramatic increase in the number of spontaneous arrivals applying for political asylum in the United States in 1988. Some 60,736 asylum applications were filed during the year, as opposed to 26,107 the previous year, a 42 percent increase. The most dramatic percentage increases were for Salvadoran and Guatemalan asylum applicants, whose numbers increased tenfold. Salvadoran applications increased from

2,684 in FY 1987 to 27,048 in FY 1988, while Guatemalan applications increased from 640 in FY 1987 to 6,384 in FY 1988. Despite a great deal of publicity about Nicaraguan arrivals at the end of the year, there was a relatively small increase in Nicaraguan asylum applications from 13,337 in FY 1987 to 16,170 in FY 1988. The number of Nicaraguans apprehended by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and therefore not allowed to apply affirmatively for asylum, but only in the context of deportation proceedings, actually declined in FY 1988 to 3,280 from 4,819 the previous year, a 32 percent drop. However, in the first quarter of FY 89, 2,089 Nicaraguans were apprehended, indicating an increase in the pace of their arrival. While Salvadoran apprehensions increased by 46 percent in FY 1988 (from 9,780 in FY 1987 to 14,322) and Guatemalan apprehensions increased by 38 percent over the previous year (from 6,722 to 9,246), the overall number of aliens apprehended fell by 18 percent. As in previous years, the overwhelming majority of apprehensions—94 percent—were of Mexicans, who rarely seek asylum.

In April, a federal judge ruling in a class action suit, *Orantes-Hernandez v. Meese*, ordered the INS to stop employing threats, misrepresentation, subterfuge, or other forms of coercion to induce Salvadorans to accept "voluntary departure" to El Salvador. He said that "a substantial number of Salvadorans who flee El Salvador possess a well-founded fear of persecution pursuant to U.S. asylum laws."

Nevertheless, asylum approval rates for Salvadorans remained at a paltry 2.7 percent in FY 1988, the same as the previous year. The average approval rate for all nationalities was 39.1 percent in 1988.

In October, USCR issued *The Back of the Hand: Bias and Restrictionism Towards Central American Asylum Seekers in North America*, a report analyzing the disparate treatment of Salvadorans and Guatemalans, in particular, during the Reagan years. "Rather than putting refugees on an equal footing," the report charged, the Reagan Administration "continued to show a marked preference for those fleeing communist regimes while tending to overlook the human rights abuses of friendly governments whose citizens were fleeing to the United States." In such cases, noted the report, "the tendency was to require unreasonable levels of documentation to support the asylum applicant's claim that the persecution feared was individually directed at the applicant."

In mid-December the INS started a new policy of deciding asylum claims at the INS office where the applications are first filed. This caused an immediate bottleneck at the small INS office in Harlingen, Texas, on the Mexican-U.S. border. Within days, hundreds of asylum seekers were crowding into makeshift camps in fields, occupying abandoned buildings, and overwhelming church shelters. A judge's restraining order temporarily blocked the policy, but the INS had clearly signaled its intention of taking a harder line with Central American asylum seekers by trying to limit travel and work authorization.

On Christmas eve, the U.S. Coast Guard interdicted and returned about 400 Haitians, bringing to 4,671 the number of Haitians interdicted and returned to Haiti in 1988. Since the interdiction program began in 1981, 18,250 Haitians have been interdicted. INS examiners aboard the Coast Guard cutters determine whether any Haitians have a basis for claiming asylum. Since 1981, no more than four of the interdicted Haitians have been brought to the United States to file for asylum, and the INS could not say whether or not any of those individuals had been granted asylum.

DIRECTORY OF ORGANIZATIONS

The following are selected international, governmental, and private U.S. organizations providing information about or assistance for refugees. Descriptions are generally provided by the agencies themselves.

International Organizations

Centre for Documentation on Refugees (CDR), 5–7 av. de la Paix. 1202 Geneva, Switzerland. Telephone: (022) 310–261. Head of the CDR: Hans Thoolen.

Computer-based documentation center which gathers, stores, and disseminates information on all aspects of refugee protection, reception, resettlement, and integration. The center forms part of UNHCR, but also serves outside users. Reading room and computer files available through staff. Publisher of quarterly *REFUGEE ABSTRACTS* and ad hoc bibliographies.

Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM), 17, route des Morillons. P.O. Box 71, CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland. Telephone: (022) 980–066. Director General: James N. Purcell, Jr. Representatives: New York—Richard Scott, Room 717, 1123 Broadway, New York, NY 10010. (212) 463-8422; California—James Gildea, 2173 Francisco Blvd., Suite D, San Rafael, CA 94901. (415) 459-8035; Washington—Gretchen S. Bolton, 440 National Press Bldg., 529 14th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20045. (202) 662-7099.

Established in 1951 to arrange resettlement processing and transportation for refugees and migrants. Conducts related programs for medical screening, language training, and cultural orientation. Plans and implements programs for the transfer of specialized human resources through migration to developing countries. Organizes biennial international seminars on major migration themes. Represented in forty countries worldwide.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 17 Avenue de la Paix, CH-1202 Geneva, Switzerland. Telephone: (022) 34 60 01. Telex: 22269. Delegations in 43 countries. In the U.S.—780 Third Avenue, 28th Floor, New York, NY 10017. (212) 371-0770. President: Cornelio Sommaruga.

Founder of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Promotes international humanitarian law. A Swiss, independent, neutral organization with the internationally recognized role of humanitarian intermediary between belligerants during armed conflicts. ICRC protects and assists the victims of international and civil wars and of internal disturbances and tensions by providing medical aid, relief supplies, a tracing and information agency for prisoners of war and missing persons, a service for transmission of family messages, and visits to civilian internees and prisoners of war and political detainees.

League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 17 chemin des Crets, P.O. Box 372, CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland. Telephone: (022) 345–580. Telex: 22555 LRCS-CH. Secretary-General: Par Stenback.

The international federation of 147 national societies throughout the world whose Secretariat coordinates Red Cross/Red Crescent emergency relief activities to assist refugees and other victims of disaster.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Case Postale 2500, CH-1211 Geneva 2 Depot, Switzerland. (022) 39 81 11. High Commissioner: Jean-Pierre Hocke. UNHCR Branch Office at UN Headquarters, UN Plaza, New York, New York 10017. (212) 963-0074 or 6200. UNHCR Liaison Office, 1718 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009. (202) 387-8546.

Established in 1951 to provide international protection to refugees who fall within the scope of its statute and to seek durable solutions for the problems of refugees. Also coordinates assis-

tance programs for displaced persons in accordance with various subsequent General Assembly resolutions. Representation in over 100 countries.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 3 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017. (212) 326-7000. Executive Director: James Grant.

Since 1946, has cooperated with developing countries in providing child assistance programs involving nutrition, primary health care, water and sanitation, and education. Provides humanitarian assistance to emergency victims of natural and man-made disasters.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Vienna International Centre, PO Box 700, A-1400 Vienna, Austria. Telephone: (011) 43 1 26 31, ext. 4530. Commissioner-General: Giorgio Giacomelli. New York Liaison Office: John Miles, UN Bldg., Rm. DC2-0550, New York, NY 10017. (212) 963-2255.

Since 1950, has provided assistance to registered Palestinian refugees, now numbering more than two million, in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Offers basic health and relief services to eligible refugees, and education to children up to the lower secondary level, as well as vocational and teacher training at eight centers. Also provides emergency relief services to Palestine refugees displaced by war and violence, as it has been doing continuously since 1975 in Lebanon.

World Council of Churches, Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee & World Service, 150, Route de Ferney, P.O. Box 66, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland. Telephone: (022) 91 61 11. Telex: 23 423 oik ch. Coordinator: Melaku Kifle.

Works with local churches in about 70 countries in support of their refugee service, including both emergency and long-term assistance. Also, in cooperation with local churches, advocates on behalf of refugees; provides resettlement services; public information and training; and facilitates meetings between churches on refugee issues.

World Food Program (WFP), Via Cristoforo Colombo 426, 00145 Rome, Italy. Executive Director: James C. Ingram. Telephone: 06–57971. Telex: 626675 WFP I. Liaison Office at UN Headquarters. Director: T.A. Tomlinson, Room DC1–1027. (212) 963-8364.

The food aid arm of the United Nations System, with offices in 80 developing countries, provides both long-term development assistance and emergency aid. A major share of the program's emergency resources is channeled to more than 8.5 million refugees and displaced persons around the world. Often WFP arranges on behalf of other donors the procurement, shipment and delivery of commodities and coordination of the food aid shipments in emergency situations. Also assists governments in disaster-stricken countries in the implementation of large-scale logistics operations.

U.S. Government Offices

Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs, Transition Program for Refugee Children, Division of State and Local Programs, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Rm. 421, Reporters Building, Washington, DC 20202. (202) 732-5708. Senior Program Officer: Jonathan H. Chang.

Administers federal grants to states for educational services to refugee children in public and private (nonprofit) local schools.

Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement, Family Support Administration, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20447. (202) 252-4545. Director: Bill F. Gee.

Assists refugees in achieving rapid economic self-sufficiency following their arrival in the United States. Assistance primarily provided through a state-administered resettlement program. Reimburses states for costs incurred in providing cash and medical assistance to needy refugees who have been in the United States 31 months or less. Provides social service grants to states primarily for making available English language and employment training services to refugees.

Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 425 Eye St. NW, Washington, DC 20536. (202) 633-2000. Commissioner: Alan C. Nelson.

Administers immigration and naturalization laws relating to the admission, exclusion, deportation, and naturalization of aliens.

Department of State, Bureau for Refugee Programs, Room 6808, 2201 C St. NW, Washington, DC 20520. (202) 647-5822. Director: Jonathan Moore.

Formulates policy for and directs U.S. refugee and migration programs; assists refugees abroad and during reception and placement in the U.S.

House Judiciary Committee, 2137 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515. (202) 225-3951. Chairman: Jack Brooks; Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law. Chairman: Bruce A. Morrison.

Studies and makes recommendations on immigration and naturalization, citizenship, admission of refugees, treaties and international agreements, and other appropriate matters.

Office of the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs, Department of State, (S/R) Rm. 7526, 2201 C St. NW, Washington, DC 20520. (202) 647-3964. U.S. Coordinator for Refugees: Jonathan Moore.

Coordinates the development and implementation of the international and domestic refugee policies of the U.S. government.

Senate Judiciary Committee, 224 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20510. (202) 224-5225. Chairman: Joseph Biden; Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Policy, 518 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20510. (202) 224-7878. Chairman: Edward M. Kennedy.

Studies and makes recommendations on the problems of refugees; has jurisdiction over immigration and naturalization legislation.

U.S. Resettlement Agencies

Following are selected U.S. voluntary agencies that participate in programs to resettle refugees. Readers may contact such agencies for information on sponsorship.

American Council for Nationalities Service, 95 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Telephone: (212) 532-5858. FAX: (212) 532-8558. Executive Director: Wells C. Klein.

Since 1975, actively engaged in the resettlement of refugees and entrants from Indochina, Cuba, Afghanistan, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, and other African countries. The U.S. Committee for Refugees is an ACNS public information program. International Social Services—American Branch is also affiliated with ACNS.

American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, Inc., 1776 Broadway, Room 2105, New York, NY 10019. (212) 265-1919. Chief Executive Officer: Vojtech Jerabek.

Organized in 1948 to help resettle Czechoslovak and Central and Eastern-European refugees. Since 1975, AFCR has participated in the resettlement of Indochinese refugees.

Church World Service/Immigration and Refugee Program, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115. (212) 870-2164. Director: Dale S. de Haan.

A part of the National Council of Churches. Provides refugee resettlement and first asylum services in the U.S. and responds to human need around the world. Works closely with ecumenical agencies worldwide, including the World Council of Churches.

Episcopal Migration Ministries (formerly The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief/Refugee Migration Affairs), 815 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017. (212) 687-9454. Executive Director: Mrs. Marion M. Dawson.

Official channel through which the Episcopal Church responds to relief and development needs of refugees, migrants, displaced persons, and asylum seekers globally. Resettles refugees and assists immigrants throughout the U.S. through 98 Episcopal dioceses. Assists refugees throughout the world in concert with the Anglican Communion and partner agencies, in cooperation with the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. Advocates for legislation to respond to the protection and resettlement needs of refugees and displaced persons.

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Inc. (HIAS), 200 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10003. (212) 674-6800. Executive Vice President: Karl D. Zukerman.

The refugee and migration agency of the organized American Jewish community. Assists Jewish refugees and migrants from Eastern Europe, Middle East, North Africa, and elsewhere. Also assists Indochinese, Ethiopian, Afghan, and other non-Jewish refugees through programs in cooperation with the U.S. government. Global network of offices and affiliated organizations in 47 countries on six continents.

International Rescue Committee, 386 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016. (212) 679-0010. Executive Director: Robert P. DeVecchi.

Nonsectarian, nonpartisan voluntary agency providing medical, public health, education, emergency relief, and resettlement services for refugees and displaced victims of war.

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, 360 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10010. (212) 532-6350. Executive Director: The Rev. Dr. Donald H. Larsen.

Provides a full range of services to refugees and their sponsors from pre-arrival through initial resettlement, with a nationwide network of local offices, congregations, and community groups. Also provides immigration counseling. Since World War II, has resettled refugees from Eastern Europe, Indochina, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Africa. Trains and encourages Lutheran groups in advocacy processes. Has special unit for first asylum and Central American concerns.

Migration and Refugee Services (MRS), United States Catholic Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005. (202) 659-6618. Executive Director: Rev. Msgr. Nicholas DiMarzio.

Responsible for all immigrant, migrant, and refugee activities conducted under the auspices of the

U.S. Catholic Conference. Coordinates a national network of more than 170 diocesan refugee resettlement offices and 70 local immigration offices. Works with public and private sector agencies to resettle individuals and families in the U.S.

Tolstoy Foundation, Inc., 200 Park Ave. South, Suite 1612, New York, NY 10003. (212) 677-7770. Executive Director: Leon O. Marion.

Originally founded to assist Russian refugees. Scope broadened to provide a range of services to refugees from Eastern Europe, the Near East, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Oppressed minorities such as Tibetans, Circassions, and Armenians have also received assistance. European headquarters in Munich and South American headquarters in Buenos Aires oversee offices in these regions. Six regional offices in the U.S. provide resettlement services including orientation, training, employment counseling, placement, English language training referral, and school placement for children.

World Relief/Refugee Services Division: National Association of Evangelicals, P.O. Box WRC, Nyack, NY 10960. (914) 268-4135. Director for Domestic Ministries and Refugee Resettlement Division: Peggy Gilbert.

Provides comprehensive refugee services through an international network of offices, including both regional and satellite offices in the U.S. Overseas, provides relief and development assistance in countries of first asylum. Domestically, assists sponsoring churches, community groups, families, and individuals from pre-arrival through initial resettlement of Indochinese, Afghan, African, and Eastern European refugees. Provides ongoing services to Cuban and Haitian entrants, other refugee communities, and ethnic churches.

Aid & Information Organizations

Following are selected voluntary agencies and human rights and educational organizations that provide assistance to or information about refugees.

Africare, Inc., 440 R St. NW, Washington, DC 20001. (202) 462-3164. Executive Director: C. Payne Lucas.

Dedicated to improving the quality of life in rural Africa through the development of water resources, increased food production, the delivery of health services, and refugee assistance. Currently operates more than 220 programs in Africa and many development education programs in the United States. Refugee programs currently in East, Southern, and Francophone Africa.

Alien Rights Law Project, 1400 Eye St. NW, Suite 450, Washington, DC 20005. (202) 682-5900. Director: Carolyn Waller.

Begun in 1978 by the Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights under Law, the project provides legal assistance to aliens, focusing on asylum and refugee issues as well as those cases where aliens suffer discrimination or are deprived of civil rights because of immigration status.

American Council for Voluntary International Action (InterAction), 200 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10003. (212) 777-8210. Washington, DC Office—1815 H St. NW, 11th floor, Washington, DC 20006. President, Chief Executive Officer: Peter J. Davies. Program Officer, Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs (New York Office): Susan Khavouri.

A broadly based, participatory association of 120 U.S. private and voluntary organizations working in international development, relief and reconstruction, migration, refugee assistance and resettlement, public policy and federal relations, and education on Third World issues. Member agencies participate in any or all of six working committees: Development Assistance, Migration and Refugee Affairs, Resources, Public Policy, Development Education, and Private Funding.

American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102. (215) 241-7000. Executive Secretary: Asia Bennett.

Quaker organization that provides food, shelter, and supplies, especially in response to needs created by war, disaster, gross violations of human rights, where provisions of relief may lead to constructive community development. Advocacy for refugees in the United States.

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc., 711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 687-6200. Executive Vice President: Michael Schneider.

Established in 1914, serves as the overseas arm of the organized American Jewish community and provides for the rescue, relief, and rehabilitation of Jewish communities around the world. Current programs in more than 30 countries are largely funded by the campaigns of the United Jewish Appeal. Nonsectarian activities have benefitted people in El Salvador, Mexico, Colombia, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Italy, and elsewhere.

American Jewish Philanthropic Fund, 386 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016. (212) 679-0010. President: Charles J. Tanenbaum.

Provides relief, resettlement, and retraining services to Jewish refugees in Europe and the U.S. through programs administered by the International Rescue Committee.

American Red Cross, 17th & D-Sts. NW, Washington, DC 20006. (202) 737-8300. President: Richard F. Schubert. International Social Services Unit: Mary-Lou McCutcheon (202) 639-3308.

Works in cooperation with the 145 Red Cross/Red Crescent societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Assists refugees in locating missing family members through its Tracing Services. Other Red Cross programs include disaster preparedness and relief, and the strengthening of programs of other national societies.

American Refugee Committee, Headquarters: 2344 Nicollet Ave., Rm. 350, Minneapolis, MN 55404. (612) 872-7060. Chicago Office: 317 Howard St., Evanston, IL 60202. Executive Director: Jack D. Soldate.

Internationally, provides medical volunteers for refugee camps in Thailand (Southeast Asia) and in Sudan and Malawi (Africa), to provide direct care, medical training, and nutritional feeding for Indochinese, Eritrean, and Mozambican refugees. In U.S., provides acculturation assistance; Illinois program focuses on public/mental health and English language/citizenship training; Minnesota Program uses volunteer American mentors with traditional educational experience to move refugee youth, women and elders toward self-reliance

Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WCIX 8 DJ, United Kingdom. Secretary General: Ian Martin. U.S. Section: 322 8th Ave., New York, NY 10001. Executive Director: John G. Healey. Address requests for assistance to Refugee Office, 655 Sutter, Suite 402, San Francisco, CA 94102. (415) 776-2473.

International human rights organization working for the release of prisoners of conscience, for fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners, and to abolish torture and executions worldwide. Provides information for political asylum applications and opposes refoulement of persons who might reasonably be expected to be imprisoned as prisoners of conscience, tortured, or killed. Publishes annual report, newsletter, and country and special reports on worldwide human rights conditions.

Armenian Assembly of America, 122 "C" St., NW, Suite 350, Washington, DC 20001. Telephone: (202) 393-3434. FAX: (202) 638-4904. Executive Director: Ross Vartian.

Through the Armenian Refugee Coordinating Committee (ARCC), the Assembly advocates for a humane and appropriate response to the plight of Armenian refugees, provides direct assistance, and serves as a resource for the public and private sectors and media for information about Armenian refugees and emigres. In 1988, ARCC operated direct assistance programs in Belgium, Greece, and Pakistan.

Boat People S.O.S. Committee, 6970 Linda Vista Road, San Diego, CA 92111. (619) 571-3957. Executive Director: Tiep Phan.

Mission is to help Vietnamese refugees in refugee camps or on open sea. Organizes rescue missions to rescue boat people on open sea. Offices throughout the United States and branches in Canada, Australia, Japan, and Europe.

CARE, 660 First Ave., New York, NY 10016. (212) 686-3110. Executive Director: Dr. Philip Johnston.

An international aid and self-help development organization. Responds to the needs of refugees and displaced persons in emergency situations through effective delivery systems to facilitate the distribution of food and other aid. Also implements long-term development programs in health and nutrition education and natural resource management to improve living conditions and facilitate self-sufficiency among refugees, displaced persons, and repatriates. Has refugee programs in Somalia, Sudan, and Thailand and programs for the displaced in Chad, Mali, Niger, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Mozambique.

Catholic Relief Services—USCC (CRS), 1011 First Ave., New York, NY 10022. (212) 838-4700. Executive Director: Lawrence A. Pezzullo.

Overseas relief and development agency of the American Catholic community. Active in 74 countries with nutrition, community development, self-sufficiency, emergency relief, refugee aid, and rehabilitation projects. Major refugee foci are Africa and Central America. Refugee assistance in 1987 was valued at thirteen million, or five percent of the CRS budget. Works only overseas.

Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St., NW, Washington, DC 20037. (202) 429-9292. President: G. Richard Tucker.

Operates the Refugee Service Center, with offices in Washington, DC and Manila, Philippines, under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of State. The Washington office acts as a liaison between the State Department's Overseas Refugee Training Programs in Thailand, the Philippines, several sites in Europe, and Botswana, Africa, and the stateside resettlement community. Manila office serves the testing, materials, and information needs of the Overseas Refugee Training programs in Southeast Asia. Additionally, refugee educational materials, including teaching materials and phrasebooks, have been placed in the ERIC database by CAL's Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics.

Center for Migration Studies (CMS), 209 Flagg Place, Staten Island, NY 10304-1148. (718) 351-8800. Executive Director: Lydio F. Tomasi.

Founded in 1964, CMS encourages the interdisciplinary study of human migration and refugee

movements everywhere through scientific research projects; publication of the quarterly *International Migration Review* and the bimonthly *Migration World Magazine* as well as of books, occasional papers and the *CMS Newsletter*; the CMS Annual National Legal Conference on Immigration and Refugee Policy in Washington, DC; and a specialized library and archives on migration and refugees.

Central America Resource Center, Refugee Legal Support Service (RLSS), Box 2327, 2520 Longview St., #408 Austin, Texas 78768. (512) 476–9841. Director: Jill Gronquist.

Established in 1983, provides political asylum documentation for refugees from all Central American countries. Information is obtained from an extensive human-rights data base of computer-indexed U.S., Central American, and international human-rights reports, newsclipping services, and church and government reports. Referrals are made to direct service organizations and attorneys with comparable cases.

Cultural Survival, Inc., 11 Divinity Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138. (617) 495-2562. President: David Maybury-Lewis.

Provides research and analysis concerning the survival of indigenous peoples and ethnic groups. Examines ethnic persecution as cause of refugee flows. Involved in maintaining the land and health care necessary for the survival of threatened groups.

Direct Relief International, 2801-B De La Vina St., P.O. Box 30820, Santa Barbara, CA 93130. (805) 687-3694. President: Robert K. McGill.

Receives and donates contributions of pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, and equipment to assist needy health facilities in medically less developed areas of the world, as well as refugees and other victims of natural disaster and civil strife. Recruits, screens, and arranges assignments for volunteer doctors, nurses, and other medical/dental personnel.

Eritrean Relief Committee, Inc., 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 769, New York, NY 10115. (212) 870-2727. Executive Director: Tesfa A. Seyoum.

Founded in 1976, aids Eritreans affected by war, drought, and famine, including people displaced internally and refugees in the Sudan. U.S. partner agency of the indigenous Eritrean Relief Association (ERA), based in the Sudan, which focuses on self-help and grassroots initiatives. Emergency assistance includes food, medicine, shelter, and pest control. Development support includes an agricultural rehabilitation program, rural health care facilities, and vocational and academic education projects.

Exodus World Service, P.O. Box 7000, West Chicago, IL 60185–7000. (312) 733-8433. Executive Director: Dennis Ripley.

International humanitarian agency that provides educational services to individuals and churches to heighten their knowledge and awareness of refugees. Exodus advocates for humane and compassionate treatment of refugees, and assists in every stage of their flight and settlement.

The Experiment in International Living (EIL). Projects in International Development and Training Division, Kipling Road, Brattleboro, VT 05301. (802) 257-4628. Vice-President: Barry Sidman.

In a consortium with Save the Children Federation and World Education, offers English as a second language, cultural orientation, work orientation, preparation for American secondary schools and native language literacy for Indochinese adults and families in Phanat Nikhom, Thailand. Program assists refugees in becoming self-sufficient in the U.S. In Pakistan, conducts a curriculum development and teacher training program for Afghan teachers.

European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles, Bondway House, 3–9 Bondway, London S.W.8., U.K. Telephone: (01) 582-9928. General Secretary: Philip Rudge.

International forum for 50 West European nongovernmental organizations that assist refugees or are concerned with refugee asylum policy. Monitors national and international developments, promotes legal and information networks, and advocates progressive standards for the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers. Secretariat based in London.

Freedom House, 48 East 21 St., New York, NY 10010. (212) 730-7744. Executive Director: Leonard R. Sussman.

Publishes a survey of freedom; monitors compliance with the Helsinki Accords; publishes writing from individuals in countries where there is oppression; and has information and analysis programs on the Caribbean Basin, Central America, Afghanistan, Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and other countries.

Georgetown University Center for Immigration Policy and Refugee Assistance (CIPRA), P.O. Box 2298, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057. (202) 625-3545. Director: Fr. Harold Bradley, S.J.

Provides research, training and consultation to contribute to the development of humane, reasonable and enforceable immigration and refugee policies. Sponsors lectures, seminars, public meetings on refugee policy; and educational programs offering internships in refugee assistance and medicine, dental care, and nursing, small business training and leadership development. Tutorial program offers community service to refugees in local school systems. Conducts research on migration in the Americas and U.S. immigration legislation and its effects.

Grassroots International, P.O. Box 312, Cambridge, MA 02139. (617) 497-9180.

Provides humanitarian assistance to Third World peoples and social movements as a basis for building awareness and activism among North Americans in support of equity, justice, and peace. Sends funds and material aid to local partner organizations linked to broad-based movements for change in crisis areas—currently South Africa, the Philippines, the Horn of Africa, and the Middle East. All projects supported are community-based with emphasis on community organizing and empowerment.

Holt International Children's Services, Inc. 1195 City View, Box 2880, Eugene, OR 97402. (503) 687-2202. Executive Director: David H. Kim.

An international child-caring agency serving children in Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, India, and Latin America. Works with affiliate agencies in providing a wide range of services to homeless children. Adoption philosophy is to 1) re-unite the child with birth parents if possible, 2) place the child with adoptive parents in the country of origin, or 3) if the first two solutions are not possible, provide a permanent home for the child with a family in the United States.

Human Rights Internet, Harvard Law School, Pound Hall, Room 401, Cambridge, MA 02138. (617) 495-9924. Telex: 5106014536. Executive Director: Laurie S. Wiseberg.

An international communications network and clearinghouse that serves the information needs of the human rights community: scholars, activists, and policymakers concerned with the promotion and protection of internationally recognized human rights. Publishes *Human Rights Internet Reporter*, a comprehensive reference work on humanitarian activity worldwide.

Indochina Resource Action Center (IRAC), 1628 16th St. NW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20009. (202) 667-4690. Executive Director: Le Xuan Khoa.

Assists Southeast Asians in the U.S. to make the transition from the status of refugees to a productive Asian-American minority. Major activities include public education and advocacy, leadership and citizenship development, capacity-building for Indochinese self-help organizations, and economic development.

International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), 37–39 rue de Vermont, Case postale 96, CH-1211 Geneva 20 CIC, Switzerland. (022) 33 41 50. Secretary General: Dr. Andre Van Chau. President: Mr. Edward De Brandt. In the U.S., 1319 F St. NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20004.

Links Catholic assistance agencies in both first asylum and refugee resettlement countries, providing logistical and sometimes financial support for their emigration processing activities. Since 1951, has administered a series of travel loan funds for refugees and migrants. Acts as Joint Voluntary Agency Representative in six countries. Administers the U.S. component of the Orderly Departure Program. Promotes local settlement activities through project assistance and training of refugee officers.

International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), 13 Rue Gautier, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland. Telephone: (022) 326–600. FAX: 867–237. Telex: 22891 icva ch. Executive Director: Anthony Kozlowski.

Founded in 1962 to provide a forum for voluntary agencies active in the fields of humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. At present, has 80 members comprising international and national voluntary agencies.

International Social Service—American Branch, 95 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016 (212) 532-5858. Executive Director: Wells C. Klein. Associate Director: Harvey Steinberg.

Established in 1924, liaison between social agencies in U.S. and agencies abroad to resolve on a case-by-case basis problems that derive from international migration and the separation of families by national boundaries. Special emphasis on services and protection for children in migration, inter-country adoption planning, and family reunification, including refugee families. Member of an international structure with General Secretariat in Geneva. Since 1983, affiliated with the American Council for Nationalities Service.

Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 330 Seventh Ave., 10th Floor North, New York, NY 10001. (212) 629-6170. Executive Director: Michael Posner. Director, Political Asylum Project: Arthur Helton.

Public interest law center in the fields of international human rights and refugee law. Monitors human rights in countries around the world, including those receiving U.S. foreign aid. Works to ensure that persons seeking refuge in the U.S. receive the protections they are guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution and international law. Legal representation is provided by volunteer attorneys for individual asylum applicants who cannot afford counsel.

Lutheran World Relief, 360 Park Ave., South, New York, NY 10010. (212) 532-6350. Executive Director: Norman E. Barth.

Serves as the overseas development and relief agency on behalf of most U.S. Lutherans to assist with long-term and emergency help for people,

especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Refugee assistance is often channeled through programs of the Lutheran World Federation.

Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501. (717) 859-1151. Canadian Office—134 Plaza Dr., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 5K9. (204) 261-6381. Executive Secretary: John A. Lapp.

Cooperative relief and service agency for Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in North America. Provides material aid and development assistance to refugees from man-made and natural disasters. Current work includes assistance to refugees in the Horn of Africa, Central America, Southeast Asia, and Middle East. Arranges resettlement for refugees in the U.S. and Canada.

Minority Rights Group, 29 Craven St., London WC2N 5 NT, U.K. (01) 930-6659. Director: Alan Phillips. New York Branch: Sue Roff, 35 Claremont Ave., Suite 4S, New York, NY 10027. (212) 864-7986.

International human rights information and education body. Publishes reports on minority groups worldwide. Free list of reports and activities available.

National Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Forum, 227 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Suite 120, Washington, DC 20002. (202) 544-0004. President: Rick Swartz.

A national, nonprofit, educational organization with a broad multi-institutional and multi-ethnic membership. Mission is to establish positive working relationships among the diverse communities represented by its membership, and to promote the pro-immigrant, pro-refugee philosophy embodied in its statement of principles. By creating and preserving a national atmosphere conducive to and supportive of the migration and full integration of newcomers into our society, helps assure that its diverse membership can best carry out their respective missions.

Operation California, Inc. 7615 1/2 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90046. (213) 658-8876. Telex 295252 OPCAUR. Executive Director: Richard Walden.

A nonprofit organization founded in 1979. Objectives are to collect and transport high-priority emergency relief supplies to areas of need. Has been active in Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Tibet, Kampuchea, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Ecuador, Mexico, Lebanon, Poland, and the United States.

Oxfam America, 115 Broadway, Boston, MA 02116. (617) 482-1211. Executive Director: Dr. John Hammock.

Funds small-scale agricultural and technical assistance projects in Asia, Africa, and Latin America designed to increase self-reliance and promote lasting economic and social development. Also develops educational programs for Americans.

Polish-American Immigration and Relief Committee, 119 East 15th St., New York, NY 10003. (212) 254-2240. Executive Vice President: Janusz Krzyzanowski.

Nonsectarian voluntary agency founded in 1947 to help displaced persons and political refugees. Field offices in Europe. Activities include resettlement, adjustment of status, family reunification, and social services.

Rav Tov, Inc., International Jewish Rescue Organization, 500 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211. (718) 963-1991.

Through its network of overseas offices, provides care and maintenance, medical assistance, visa documentation, and pre-migration planning to refugees while in transit. In countries of resettlement, provides a full range of services including reception, housing, medical care, language training, education, employment counseling, and maintenance assistance.

Refugee Studies Programme, Oxford University, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St. Giles, Oxford OX1 3LA. Telephone: 0865 270722. Director: Dr. Barbara Harrell-Bond.

Center for multi-disciplinary research, teaching, and training of practitioners in the field of involuntary migration. RSP provides public information; holds weekly seminars and annual international symposia to provide a forum for dialogue between academics, refugees, host government officials and agency workers. Publishes the *Directory of Current Research on Refugees and Other Forced Migrants*, the *Journal of Refugee Studies*, and the *Refugee Participation Network*.

Refugee Policy Group (RPG), 1424 16th St. NW, Suite 401, Washington, D.C 20036. (202) 387-3015. Executive Director: Dennis Gallagher.

Serves as an independent center of policy analysis and research on domestic and international refugee issues. Houses a refugee resource library and provides auspices for policy analysts, researchers, and program developers to meet and conduct their work.

Refugee Voices, Inc., 713 Monroe St., NE, Washington, DC 20017. (202) 832-0020. Director: Frank Moan, S.J.

A public education organization that, through various media, attempts to inform Americans of the plight of refugees settled in the U.S. and those in camps throughout the world.

Refugee Women in Development (RefWID), 20 F Street NW, Fourth Floor, Washington, DC 20001. (202) 628-9600. Executive Director: Sima Wali.

The only national organization established specifically to promote the self-sufficiency and economic development efforts of refugee women in the United States. Priorities include organizing newcomer refugee women around economic development and self-sufficiency efforts; developing training and curriculum materials; developing multilingual newsletter for use as leadership and information exchange tools among refugee women of diverse ethnic origins; promoting better understanding of refugee women's needs and resources.

Refugees International, 220 I Street, NE, Suite 240, Washington, DC 20002, (202) 547-3785. Executive Director: Shepard C. Lowman.

Monitors refugee situations worldwide to ensure that refugees' basic needs for protection and care are met. Provides information to policymakers and the public through national membership organization. Advocates fair refugee policy in U.S. and abroad.

Relief and Development Institute, 1 Ferdinand Place, London NWI 8EE, U.K. Telephone: (01) 485-0944. Telex: DISINST 21879. Director: Edward Clay. Deputy Director: Christine Hogg.

Researches all aspects of disaster relief and management, including refugee communities. Runs workshops, briefing and training courses for field staff, and acts as an information center. Also publishes reports; the newsletter, *RDI News*; and the quarterly journal, *Disasters*.

The Salvation Army World Service Office (SAWSO), 1025 Vermont Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005. (202) 737-3330. Executive Director: Dean B. Seiler.

As a development arm of The Salvation Army, provides technical and financial assistance in support of self-help, relief, and training programs. Assistance, including aid to disaster victims, refugees, and displaced persons, is available to the 89 countries and territories in which The Salvation Army operates.

Save the Children Federation, Inc., 54 Wilton Rd., Westport, CT 06880. (203) 226-7272. President: James J. Bausch.

Founded in 1932, serves children through community development in 42 countries including the U.S. In its refugee programs, provides humanitarian assistance with an emphasis on making refugees self-sufficient and providing a base on which long-term development can take place. Agriculture, nutrition, health care, sanitation, education and small scale enterprise are program components in Somalia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Sudan, and Pakistan. Training in literacy, language, cultural orientation, employment skills, and secondary and primary education are program components in Thailand and Indonesia.

U.S. Committee for Refugees, 1025 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 920, Washington, DC 20005. Telephone: (202) 347-3507. FAX: (202) 347-3418. Executive Director: Wells Klein; Director: Roger P. Winter.

Public information and advocacy program of the American Council for Nationalities Service. Issues publications and provides information about refugees worldwide. Participates actively as refugee advocate in development of U.S. policy with respect to refugees in U.S. and abroad. Supports specialized UN agencies working to ensure refugee protection and assistance. Publishes *The World Refugee Survey* and *Refugee Reports*, a monthly news service on refugee issues.

U.S. Committee for UNICEF, 331 E. 38th St., New York, NY 10016. (212) 686-5522. President: Lawrence E. Bruce, Jr.

Established in 1947, the oldest and largest of 34 national committees for UNICEF. The committee informs Americans about UNICEF's efforts to meet the needs of the developing world's children and their mothers in the areas of nutrition, primary health care, clean water and sanitation, education, social services, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. Raises funds for UNICEF through greeting card sales, group fund-raising events, direct contributions, and special events.

World Concern International. PO Box 33000, 19303 Fremont Ave. North, Seattle, WA 98133. (206) 546-7201. Executive Director: Fred Gregory.

Provides emergency relief, but focuses primarily on long-term development to refugees and non-refugee populations in Asia, Africa and the Americas. Assistance is usually provided through indigenous agencies in the form of technical assistance, grants, and commodities.

World Vision Inc., 919 W. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016. (213) 357-7979. President: Dr. Robert A. Seiple.

Founded in 1950, a Christian humanitarian organization active in 79 countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the South Pacific, and the U.S. Involved chiefly in community development, emergency relief, child care, and Christian outreach programs.

YMCA Refugee Resettlement Services, YMCA of the USA, 101 N. Wacker Dr., Chicago, Ill. 60606. (312) 977-0031. Director: Michael Diamond.

Coordinates YMCA services for refugees in the United States. Acts as liaison for local U.S. YMCAs and World Alliance of YMCAs. Cooperates with other national voluntary agencies and appropriate government agencies.

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Lao Family Community of Fresno, Inc.
3121 East Olive Avenue
Fresno, CA 93702
(209) 264-4980

GARY
International Institute of Northwest Indiana, Inc.
4433 Broadway
Gary, IN 46409
(219) 980-4636

HONOLULU
Kalihi Palama Immigrant Service Center
720 North King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
(808) 845-3918

HOUSTON
YMCA International Services
3635 W. Dallas Street
Houston, TX 77019
(713) 527-8690

JERSEY CITY
International Institute of New Jersey
880 Bergen Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07306
(201) 653-3888

KANSAS CITY
Don Bosco Community Center
529 Campbell Street
Kansas City, MO 64106
(816) 421-0546

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Asociacion Pro Servicios Sociales
Centro Aztlan
406 Scott Street
Laredo, TX 78040
(512) 724-6244

LAWRENCE
International Institute of Greater Lawrence, Inc.
454 Canal St.
Lawrence, MA 01840
(508) 687-0981

LOS ANGELES
International Institute of Los Angeles
435 South Boyle Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90033
(213) 264-6210

LOWELL
International Institute of Lowell
79 High Street
Lowell, MA 01852
(508) 459-9031

MANCHESTER
International Center, Inc.
102 N. Main Street
Manchester, NH 03102
(603) 668-8602

MILWAUKEE
International Institute of Wisconsin
2810 West Highland Boulevard
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(414) 933-0521

NEW YORK CITY
Travelers Aid Services
2 Lafayette Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10007
(212) 577-7700

OAKLAND
International Institute of East Bay
297 Lee Street
Oakland, CA 94610
(415) 451-2846

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Nationalities Service Center of Philadelphia
1300 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 893-8400

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International Institute of Rhode Island, Inc.
421 Elmwood Avenue
Providence, RI 02907
(401) 461-5940

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International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis
3800 Park Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63110
(314) 773-9090

ST. PAUL
International Institute of Minnesota
1694 Como Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
(612) 647-0191

SAN FRANCISCO
International Institute of San Francisco
2209 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 673-1720

TOLEDO
International Institute of Toledo
2040 Scottwood Avenue
Toledo, OH 43620
(419) 241-9178

WASHINGTON, DC
Travelers Aid Society of Washington, DC
1015 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 347-0101

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